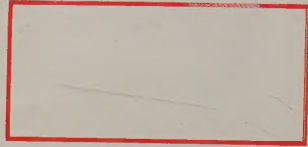
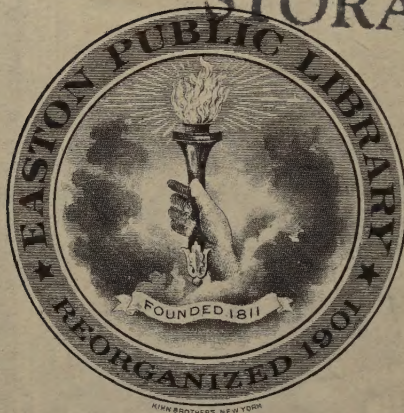


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FOUNTAIN OF LIFE
IMPRESSIONS AND COMMENTS

FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

being the

IMPRESSIONS AND COMMENTS

of

HAVELOCK ELLIS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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FOREWORD

SOME final word is needed, I am told, now that these three series of *Impressions and Comments* are at last brought together in one volume. I am not sure that I myself feel the need. Indeed, I am rather inclined to be of Paul Valéry's opinion that 'when once the work has appeared, its interpretation by the author has no more value than that by any one else.' So let it be understood that any remarks I here make about this work, which was completed seven years ago and could not be changed for better or for worse without changing its whole character, are mostly remarks that any attentive reader might make.

We are not here presented, as some have supposed, with 'extracts from a Diary.' There is no Diary. The utterances here brought forward were either evoked in natural response to some impact from the environment, or they arose, in a more spontaneous and involuntary way, at any moment of the day or night, and were at once scribbled down in pencil on any scrap of paper at hand. When they were not thus swiftly caught, they were usually lost to memory, as are dreams, which come to us fully formed out of the unconscious and quickly fall back into it. At leisure these scribbled papers were carefully copied out, any necessary verbal alteration or clarification, seldom other than slight, being at the same time made, but no changes in substance. If, on consideration, the substance seemed to me unsatisfactory, I simply destroyed the whole. It is because these papers admitted of no change in substance that they were dated, for each is the expression of the moment at which it arose, and might not

be true of any other moment, although I am quite ready to believe that it had undergone a long process of maturation before being suddenly presented to my conscious gaze.

Whether writings which thus come about are best termed 'Impressions and Comments' I will not decide. That was the name that seemed to me most convenient. Perhaps 'Expirations' (as opposed to 'Inspirations') might serve more accurately. A critic of evidently superior mind has loftily declared that 'they display all the merits and defects of Impressionism.' They have no more to do with Impressionism than with Commentism. I am not the disciple of any ism, and am inclined to smile at all the isms (including Ellisism), however amiably disposed to many of their adherents. This may be distressing for the victims of pigeonholism. I am sorry.

In the original Preface to these *Impressions and Comments* which follows, I compared them to leaves fluttering from a tree. I desired to make clear their separate singleness and isolation, whatever the unity of origin, in this respect contrasting with so much of my more deliberate earlier work, which was an attempt to hold in just balance that conflict between opposing tendencies wherein the deepest truth to life must always lie. The sense of the multiplicity and of the equivalence of phenomena, alike of what we call the 'soul' and what we commonly consider the external world, I may be allowed to add, was with me of early appearance. When I was sixteen I planned a psychological drama, and among the fragments of it actually written was notably one elaborating the idea that 'life was many-faceted,' so that we are for ever losing its radiant facets, dwelling on one. It is a conception that I recognise as still mine, more than half a century later, and it is constantly illustrated by these *Impressions and Comments*. To change the metaphor into a more subjective shape, we have here single jets of the spirit which in

their complexly interwoven sprays make up the fountain of life. To some of my friends this has not been quite clear, and they have been puzzled to reconcile statements here made with other parts of my work. Thus, when I have seemed to place the search for truth on a lower plane than the revelation of beauty or the treasury of feeling, they protest that I have myself spent the greater part of my life in patiently sifting facts and searching for truth. It is so; and yet I can also say, with one of the most distinguished English thinkers of the last century, who was engaged in a lifelong and never-resolved search after truth, F. H. Bradley, that 'the stage of mere truth-seeking is transcended more or less in all our lives,' though I would myself omit the 'mere.' We set out to search for truth, but in the end we find that we have ourselves been unknowingly creating truth, in this resembling again that familiar and significant symbol of our lives, the bee, which patiently extracts the nectar of the world, and yet is instinctively an artist, blending that nectar with its own substance and creating the things that are more precious than nectar.

H. E.

FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

JULY 24, 1912: I looked out from my room about ten o'clock at night. Almost below the open window a young woman was clinging to the flat wall for support, with occasional floundering movements towards the attainment of a firmer balance. In the dim light she seemed decently dressed in black; her handkerchief was in her hand; she had evidently been sick.

Every few moments some one passed by. It was quite clear that she was helpless and distressed. No one turned a glance towards her — except a policeman. He gazed at her searchingly as he passed, but without stopping or speaking; she was drunk, no doubt, but not too obtrusively incapable; he mercifully decided that she was of no immediate professional concern to him. She soon made a more violent effort to gain muscular control of herself, but merely staggered round her own escaping centre of gravity and sank gently on to the pavement in a sitting posture.

Every few moments people continued to pass within a few inches of her — men, women, couples. Unlike the priest and the Levite in the parable, they never turned away, but pursued their straight course with callous rectitude. Not one seemed so much as to see her. In a minute or two, stimulated perhaps by some sense of the impropriety of her position, she rose to her feet again, without much difficulty, and returned to cling to the wall.

A few minutes later I saw a decently dressed young woman, evidently of the working-class, walk quietly, but without an

instant's hesitation, straight up to the figure against the wall. (It was what, in Moscow, the first passer-by would have done.) I could hear her speaking gently and kindly, though of what she said I could only catch, 'Where do you live?' No answers were audible, and perhaps none were given. But the sweet Samaritan continued speaking gently. At last I heard her say, 'Come round the corner,' and with only the gentle pressure of a hand on the other's arm she guided her round the corner near which they stood, away from the careless stream of passengers, to recover at leisure. I saw no more.

Our modern civilisation, it is well known, long since transformed 'chivalry'; it was once an offer of help to distressed women; it is now exclusively reserved for women who are not distressed and clearly able to help themselves. We have to realise that it can scarcely even be said that our growing urban life, however it fosters what has been called 'urbanity,' has any equally fostering influence on instinctive mutual helpfulness as an element of that urbanity. We do not even see the helpless people who go to the wall or to the pavement. This is true of men and women alike. But when instinctive helpfulness is manifested, it seems most likely to reveal itself in a woman. That is why I would like to give to women all possible opportunities — rights and privileges alike — for social service.

JULY 27: A gentle rain was falling, and on this my first day in Paris since the unveiling of the Verlaine monument in the Luxembourg Gardens, immediately after I left Paris last year, I thought there could be no better moment to visit the spot so peculiarly fit to be dedicated to the poet who loved such spots — a *coin exquis* where the rain may fall peacefully among the trees, on his image as

once on his heart, and the tender mists enfold him from the harsh world.

I scarcely think the sculptor quite happily inspired in his conception of the face of the charming old man I knew of old in his haunts of the Boulevard Saint-Michel. It is too strong a face, too disdainful, with too much character. Verlaine was sympathetic, simple, childlike, humble; when he put on an air of pride, it was with a deliberate yet delightful pose, a child's pose. There is an air of almost military rigidity about the pride of this bust; I do not find Verlaine in that trait.

Verlaine's strength was not that of character; it was that of Nature. I could imagine that the Silenus, whom we see with his satellites near by, might be regarded in its expression, indeed in the whole conception of the group — with helpless languor and yet its divine dominance — as the monument of that divine and helpless poet whom I still recall so well, as with lame leg and stick he would drift genially along the Boulevard a few yards away.

JULY 31: At the hotel in Dijon, the flourishing capital of Burgundy, I was amused to note how curiously my room differed from what I once regarded as the type of the French room in the hotels I used to frequent. There is still a Teutonic touch in the Burgundian; he is meticulously thorough. I had six electric lights in different positions, a telephone, hot and cold water laid on into a huge basin, a foot-bath, and, finally, a wastepaper-basket. For the rest, a severely simple room, no ornaments, nothing to remind one of the brace of glass pistols and all the other ugly and useless things which filled my room at the ancient hotel in Rouen where I stayed two years ago. And the 'lavabo,' as it is here called, a spacious room with an ostentatiously noisy rush of

water which may be heard afar and awakens one at night. The sanitary and mechanical age we are now entering makes up for the mercy it grants to our sense of smell by the ferocity with which it assails our sense of hearing. As usual, what we call 'Progress' is the exchange of one Nuisance for another Nuisance.

AUGUST 5: It is an idea of mine that a country with a genius for architecture is only able to show that genius supremely in one style, not in all styles. The Catalans have a supreme genius for architecture, but they have only achieved a single style. The English have attempted all styles of architecture, but it was only in Perpendicular that we attained a really free and beautiful native style in our domestic buildings and what one might call our domestic churches. Strassburg Cathedral is thoroughly German and acceptable as such, but Cologne Cathedral is an exotic, and all the energy and the money of Germany through a thousand years can never make it anything but cold, mechanical, and artificial. When I was in Burgundy, I felt that the Burgundians had a genius for Romanesque, and that their Gothic is for the most part feeble and insipid. Now, how about the Normans? One cannot say their Romanesque is not fine, in the presence of William the Conqueror's Abbaye-aux-Hommes, here at Caen. But I should be inclined to ask (without absolutely affirming) whether the finest Norman Romanesque can be coupled with the finest Burgundian Romanesque. The Norman genius was, I think, really for Gothic, and not for what we in England call 'Norman' because it happened to come to us through Normandy. Without going to Rouen it is enough to look at many a church here. The Normans had a peculiar plastic power over stone which Gothic alone could give free scope to.

Stone became so malleable in their hands that they seem as if working in wood. Probably it really was the case that their familiarity with wood-carving influenced their work in architecture. And they possessed so fine a taste that, while they seem to be freely abandoning themselves to their wildest fantasies, the outcome is rarely extravagant (Flaubert in his *Tentation* is a great Norman architect), and at the best attains a ravishing beauty of flowing and interwoven lines. At its worst, as in Saint-Sauveur, which is a monstrosity like the Siamese twins, a church with two naves and no aisles, the general result still has its interest, even apart from the exquisite beauty of the details. It is here in Gothic, and not in Romanesque, that the Normans attained full scope. We miss the superb repose, the majestic strength, of the Romanesque of Burgundy and the southwest of France. There is something daring and strange and adventurous in Norman Romanesque. It was by no accident, I think, that the ogive, in which lay the secret of Gothic, appeared first in Norman Romanesque.

AUGUST 8: I have sometimes thought when in Spain that in ancient university towns the women tend to be notably beautiful or attractive, and I have imagined that this might be due to the continuous influence of student blood through many centuries in refining the population, the finest specimens of the young students proving irresistible to the women of the people, and so raising the level of the population by sexual selection. At Salamanca I was impressed by the unusual charm of the women, and even at Palencia to some extent noticed it, though Palencia ceased to be the great university of Spain nearly eight centuries ago. At Fécamp I have been struck by the occasional occurrence of an unusual type of feminine beauty, not, it seems to me,

peculiarly Norman, with dark, ardent, spiritual eyes, and a kind of proud hierarchical bearing. I have wondered how far the abbots and monks of this great and ancient abbey of Benedictines were occupied — in the intervals of more supra-mundane avocations — in perfecting, not only the ancient recipe of their liqueur, but also the physical type of the feminine population among which they laboured. The type I have in mind sometimes rather recalls the face of Baudelaire, who, by his mother's family from which he chiefly inherited, the Dufays, belonged, it is held probable, to Normandy.

AUGUST 9: Typical women of Normandy often have a certain highly bred air. They are slender when young, sometimes inclined to be tall, and the face — of course beautiful in complexion, for they dwell near the sea — is not seldom refined and distinguished. See the proud, sensitive nostrils of that young woman sweeping the pavement with her broom in front of the house this morning; one can tell she is of the same race as Charlotte Corday. And I have certainly never found anywhere in France women who seem to me so naturally charming and so sympathetic as the women who dwell in all this northwestern district from Paris to the sea. They are often, as one might expect, a little English-like (it might be in Suffolk on the other side of the Channel, and Beauvais, I recall, has something of the air of old Ipswich), but with a vivacity of movement, and at the same time an aristocratic precision and subtlety one fails to find in the English. When a pretty English girl of the people opens her mouth, the charm is often gone. On the contrary, I have often noticed in Normandy that a seemingly commonplace unattractive girl only becomes charming when she does open her mouth, to reveal her softness of speech, the

delicately inflexed and expressive tones, while her face lights up in harmony with her speech. Now — to say nothing of the women of the south, whose hard faces and harsh voices are often so distressing — in Dijon, whence I came to Normandy this time, the women are often sweet, even angelic of aspect, looking proper material for nuns and saints, but, to me at all events, not personally so sympathetic as the Norman women, who are no doubt quite as good but never express the fact with the same air of slightly Teutonic insipidity. The men of Normandy I regard as of finer type than the Burgundian men, and this time it is the men who express goodness more than the women. The Burgundian men, with their big moustaches turned up resolutely at the points and their wickedly sparkling eyes, have evidently set before themselves the task of incorporating a protest against the attitude of their women. But the Norman men, who allow their golden moustaches to droop, are a fine frank type of manhood at the best, pleasantly honest and unspoilt. I know, indeed, how skilful, how wily, how noble even, in their aristocratic indifference to detail, these Normans can be in extracting money from the stranger (have I not lunched simply at the Hostel Guillaume-le-Conquérant in the village of Dives for the same sum on which I have lived sumptuously for three days at the Hotel Victoria in the heart of Seville?), but the manner of their activity in this matter scarcely seems to me to be happily caught by those Parisians who delight to caricature as mere dull, avaricious plebeians, ‘Ces bons Normands.’ Their ancient chronicler said a thousand years ago of the Normans that their unbounded avarice was balanced by their equally unbounded extravagance. That, perhaps, is a clue to the magnificent achievements of the Normans, in the spiritual world even more than in the material world.

AUGUST 10: On leaving France by the boat from Dieppe I selected a seat close to which, shortly afterwards, three English people — two young women and a man — came to occupy deck-chairs already placed for them by a sailor and surrounded by their bags and wraps. Immediately one of the women began angrily asking her companions why her bag had not been placed the right side up; *she* would not have her things treated like that, etc. Her companions were gentle and conciliatory — though I noticed they left her alone during most of the passage — and the man had with attentive forethought made all arrangements for his companions' comfort. But, somehow, I looked in wonder at her discontented face and heard with surprise her peevish voice. She was just an ordinary stolid flourishing young Englishwoman. But I had been in France, and though I had been travelling for a whole fortnight I had seen nothing like this. She lay back and began reading a novel, which she speedily exchanged for a basin. I fear I felt a certain satisfaction at the spectacle. It is good for the English barbarian to be chastised with scorpions.

How pleasant at Newhaven to find myself near another woman, a young Frenchwoman, with the firm, disciplined, tender face, the sweetly modulated voice, the air of fine training, the dignified self-respect which also involves respect for others. I realised in a flash the profound contrast to that fellow-countrywoman of mine who had fascinated my attention on board the boat.

But one imagines a French philosopher, a new Taine, let us suppose, setting out from Dieppe for the 'land of Suffragettes' to write another *Notes sur l'Angleterre*. How finely he would build a great generalisation on narrow premises! How acutely he would point out the dependence of the English 'gentleman's' good qualities or the ill-conditioned qualities of his women-folk!

AUGUST 15: I enter an empty suburban railway carriage and take up a common-looking little periodical lying on the seat beside me. It is a penny weekly I had never heard of before, written for feminine readers and evidently enjoying an immense circulation. I turn over the pages. One might possibly suppose that at the present moment the feminine world is greatly excited, or at all events mildly interested, by the suffrage movement. But there is not a word in this paper from beginning to end with the faintest reference to the suffrage, nor is there anything bearing on any single great social movement of the day in which, it may seem to us, women are taking a part. Nor, again, is there anything to be found touching on ideas, not even on religion. There are, on the other hand, evidently three great interests dominating the thoughts of the readers of this paper, Clothes, Cookery, Courtship. How to make an old hat look new, how to make sweetmeats, how to behave when a man makes advances to you — these are the problems in which the readers of this journal are profoundly interested, and one can scarcely gather that they are interested in anything else. Very instructive is the long series of questions, problems posed by anxious correspondents for the editor to answer. One finds such a problem as this: Suppose you like a man, and suppose you think he likes you, and suppose he never says so — what ought you to do? The answers, fully accepting the serious nature of the problems, are kindly and sensible enough, almost maternal, admirably adapted to the calibre and outlook of the readers in this little world. But what a little world! So narrow, so palaeolithically ancient, so pathetically simple, so good, so sweet, so humble, so essentially and profoundly feminine! It is difficult not to drop a tear on the thin, common, badly printed pages.

And then, in the very different journal I have with me, I read the enthusiastic declaration of an ardent masculine

feminist — a man of the study — that the executive power of the world is to-day being transferred to women; they alone possess 'psychic vision,' they alone are interested in the great questions which men ignore — and I realise what those great questions are, Clothes, Cookery, Courtship.

AUGUST 23: I stood on the platform at Paddington station as the Plymouth Express slowly glided out. Leaning out of a third-class compartment stood the figure that attracted my attention. His head was bare and so revealed his harmoniously wavy and carefully tended grey hair. The expression of his shaven and disciplined face was sympathetic and kindly, evidently attuned to expected emotions of sorrowful farewell, yet composed, clearly not himself overwhelmed by those emotions. His right arm and open hand were held above his head, in an attitude that had in it a not too ostentatious hint of benediction. When he judged that the gracious vision was no longer visible to the sorrowing friends left behind he discreetly withdrew into the carriage. There was a feminine touch about this figure; there was also a touch of the professional actor. But on the whole it was absolutely, without the shadow of a doubt, the complete Anglican Clergyman.

SEPTEMBER 2: Nearly every day just now I have to enter a certain shop where I am served by a young woman. She is married, a mother, at the same time a businesslike young woman who is proud of her businesslike qualities. But she is also pleasant to look upon in her healthy young maternity, her frank open face, her direct speech, her simple natural manner and instinctive friendliness. From her whole body radiates the healthy happiness of her gracious person-

ality. A businesslike person, certainly, and I receive nothing beyond my due money's worth. But I always carry away something that no money can buy, and that is even more nourishing than the eggs and butter and cream she sells.

How few, it seems to me, yet realise the vast importance in civilisation of the quality of the people one is necessarily brought into contact with! Consider the vast number of people in our present communities who are harsh, ugly, ineradicably discourteous, selfish, or insolent — the people whose lives are spent in diminishing the joy of the community in which not so much Providence as the absence of Providence has placed them, in impeding that community's natural activity, in diminishing its total output of vital force. Lazy and impertinent clerks, stuck-up shop assistants, inconsiderate employers, brutal employees, unendurable servants, and no less unendurable mistresses — what place will be left for them as civilisation advances?

We have assumed, in the past, that these things and the likes of these are modifiable by nurture, and that where they cannot be cured they must be endured. But with the realisation that breeding can be, and eventually must be, controlled by social opinion, a new horizon has opened to civilisation, a new light has come into the world, the glimpse of a new Heaven is revealed.

Animals living in nature are everywhere beautiful; it is only among men that ugliness flourishes. Savages, nearly everywhere, are gracious and harmonious; it is only among the civilised that harshness and discord are permitted to prevail. Henry Ellis, in the narrative of his experiences in Hudson's Bay, in the eighteenth century, tells how a party of Eskimos — a people peculiarly tender to their children — came to the English settlement, told heart-brokenly of hardship and famine so severe that one of the children had been eaten. The English only laughed and the indignant Eski-

mos went on their way. What savages anywhere in the world would have laughed? I recall seeing, years ago, a man enter a railway carriage, fling aside the rug a traveller had deposited to retain a corner seat and obstinately hold that seat. Would such a man be permitted to live among savages? If the eugenic ideals that are now floating before men's eyes never lead us to any Heaven at all, but merely discourage among us the generation of human creatures below the level of decent savagery, they will serve their turn.

SEPTEMBER 7: The music of César Franck always brings before me a man who is seeking peace with himself and consolation with God, at a height, above the crowd, in isolation, as it were in the uppermost turret of a church tower. It recalls the memory of the unforgettable evening when Denyn played on the carillon at Malines, and from the canal side I looked up at the little red casement high in the huge Cathedral tower where the great player seemed to be breathing out his soul, in solitude, among the stars. Always when I hear the music of Franck — a Fleming, also, it may well be by no accident — I seem to be in contact with a sensitive and solitary spirit, absorbed in self-communion, weaving the web of its own Heaven and achieving the fulfilment of its own rapture.

In this symphonic poem, 'Les Djinns,' the attitude more tenderly revealed in the 'Variations Symphoniques,' and, above all, the sonata in A Major, is dramatically represented. The solitary dreamer in his tower is surrounded and assailed by evil spirits, we hear the beating of their great wings as they troop past, but the dreamer is strong and undismayed, and in the end he is left in peace, alone.

SEPTEMBER 10: It was an overture by Elgar, and the full solemn sonorous music had drawn to its properly majestic close. Beside me sat an artist friend who is a lover of music, and regularly attends these Promenade Concerts. He removed the cigarette from his lips and chuckled softly to himself for some moments. Then he replaced the cigarette and joined in the tempestuous and prolonged applause. I looked at him inquiringly. 'It is a sort of variation of the theme,' he said, 'that he sometimes calls the Cosmic Angels Working Together or the Soul of Man Striving with the Divine Essence.' I glanced at the programme again. The title was 'Cockaigne.'

SEPTEMBER 17: It has often seemed to me that the bearing of musical conductors is significant for the study of national characteristics, and especially for the difference between the English and the Continental neuro-psychic systems. One always feels inhibition and suppression (such as a Freudian has found characteristic of the English) in the movements of the English conductor, some psychic element holding the nervous play in check, and producing a stiff wooden embarrassed rigidity or an ostentatiously languid and careless indifference. At the extreme remove from this is Birnbaum, that gigantic and feverishly active spider, whose bent body seems to crouch over the whole orchestra, his magically elongated arms to stretch out so far that his wand touches the big drum. But even the quietest of these foreign conductors, Nikisch, for example, gives no impression of psychic inhibition, but rather of that refined and deliberate economy of means which marks the accomplished artist. Among English conductors one may regard Wood (*lucus a non lucendo!*) as an exception. Most of the rest — I speak of those of the old school, since those of the new school can sometimes

be volatile and feverish enough — seem to be saying all the time: 'I am in an awkward and embarrassing position, though I shall muddle through successfully. The fact is I am rather out of my element here. I am really a Gentleman.'

OCTOBER 2: Whenever I come down to Cornwall I realise the curious contradiction which lies in this region as at once a Land of Granite and a Land of Mist. On the one hand archaic rocks, primitive, mighty, unchanging, deep-rooted in the bases of the world. On the other hand, iridescent vapour, for ever changing, one moment covering the land with radiant colour, another enveloping it in a pall of gloom.

I can also see two contradictory types of people among the inhabitants of this land. On the one hand, a people of massive and solid build, a slow-moving people of firm, primitive nature, that for all their calm stolidity may give out a fiery ring if struck, and will fearlessly follow the lure of Adventure or of Right. On the other hand, a race of soft and flexible build, of shifting and elusive mind, alert to speak and slow to act, of rainbow temperament, fascinating and uncertain. Other types there may be, but certainly these two, whatever their racial origin, Children of the Granite and Children of the Mist.

OCTOBER 3: It has often interested me to observe how a nation of ancient civilisation differs from a nation of new civilisation by what may be called the ennoblement of its lower classes. Among new peoples the lower classes — whatever fine qualities they may possess — are still barbarians, if not savages. Plebeian is written all over them, in their vulgar roughly-moulded faces, in their awkward

movements, in their manners, in their servility or in their insolence. But among the peoples of age-long culture, that culture has had time to enter the blood of even the lowest social classes, so that the very beggars may sometimes be fine gentlemen. The features become firmly or delicately moulded, the movements graceful, the manners as gracious; there is an instinctive courtesy and ease, as of equal to equal, even when addressing a social superior. One has only to think of the contrast between Poland and Russia, between Spain and Germany.

I am frequently reminded of that difference here in Cornwall. Anywhere in Cornwall you may see a carter, a miner, a fisherman, a bricklayer, who with the high distinction of his finely cast face, the mingling in his manner of easy nonchalance and Old-World courtesy, seems only to need a visit to the tailor to add dignity to a Pall Mall club. No doubt England is not a new country, and the English lower social classes have become in a definite degree more aristocratic than those of Russia or even Germany. But the forefathers of the Cornish were civilised when we English were a horde of savages. One may still find humble families with ancient surnames living in the same spot as lived, we find, if we consult the Heralds' Visitations, armigerous families of the same name in the sixteenth century, already ancient, and perhaps bearing, it is curious to note, the same Christian names as the family which has forgotten them bears to-day.

So it is that in that innate ennoblement which implies no superiority either of the intellect or of the heart, but merely a greater refinement of the nervous tissue, the Cornish have displayed, from the earliest period we can discern, a slight superiority over us English. Drake, a man of this district if not a Cornishman, when sailing on his daring buccaneering adventures, dined and supped to the music of violins, a refinement which even his Pole-hunting successors of our own day

scarcely achieved. Raleigh, partly a Cornishman, still retains popular fame as the man who flung his rich cloak in the mud for the Queen to step on. To-day a poet of Cornish race when introduced in public to Sarah Bernhardt, the goddess of his youthful adoration, at once kissed her hand and declared to her that that was the moment he had all his life been looking for. But we English are not descended from the men who wrote the *Mabinogion*; our hearts and souls are expressed in *Beowulf* and *Havelok*, and more remotely in the *Chanson de Roland*. We could not imitate the Cornish if we would; and sometimes, perhaps, we would not if we could.

OCTOBER 4: I lay with a book on the rocks, overlooking a familiar scene, the great expanse of the sands at low tide. In the far distance near the river was a dim feminine figure in a long coat, accompanied by three dogs. Half an hour later, when I glanced up from my book, I chanced to notice that the slender feminine figure was marching down to the sea, leaving a little pile of garments on the middle of the sands, just now completely deserted. The slender figure leisurely and joyously disported itself in the water. Then at length it returned to the little pile, negligently guarded by the dogs, there was a faint radiance of flesh, a white towel flashed swiftly to and fro for a few moments. Then with amazing celerity the figure had resumed its original appearance, and, decorously proceeding shorewards, disappeared among the sand dunes on the way to its unknown home.

In an age when savagery has passed and civilisation has not arrived, it is only by stealth, at rare moments, that the human form may emerge from the prison house of its garments, it is only from afar that the radiance of its beauty — if beauty is still left to it — may faintly flash before us.

Among pseudo-Christian barbarians, as Heine described them, the Olympian deities still wander homelessly, scarce emerging from beneath obscure disguises, and half ashamed of their own divinity.

OCTOBER 5: I made again to-day an observation concerning a curious habit of birds and small mammals which I first made many years ago and have frequently confirmed. If when I am walking along near banks and hedges, absorbed in my own thoughts, I chance suddenly to stand still, any wild creature in covert near the spot will at once scuttle hastily and noisily away: the creature which had awaited the approaching tramp in quiet confidence that the moment of danger would soon be overpast if only he kept quiet and concealed, is overcome by so sudden a panic of terror at the arrest of movement in his neighbourhood that he betrays his own presence in the impulse to escape. The silence which one might imagine to be reassuring to the nervous animal is precisely the cause of his terror. It is a useful adaptation to the ways of the great enemy Man, whether it is an adaptation resulting from individual experience or acquired by natural selection. From the standpoint of wild animality it is the Silence of Man that is ominous.

OCTOBER 11: When I come, as now, from Cornwall to West Suffolk, I feel that I have left behind a magic land of sea and sky and exquisite atmosphere. But I have entered a land of humanity, and a land whose humanity — it may be in part from ancestral reasons — I find peculiarly congenial. Humanity is not the chief part of the charm of Cornwall, though sometimes it may seem the very efflorescence of the land. It often seems almost a parasite

there. It cannot mould the barren and stubborn soil to any ideal human shapes, or develop upon it any rich harmonious human life, such as I inhale always, with immense satisfaction, in this reposeful and beautifully wrought land of Suffolk.

On this evening of my arrival in the charming old town by the quiet river, how delicious — with remembrance still fresh of the square heavy little granite boxes in which the Cornish live — to find once more these ancient, half-timbered houses reminiscent of the Norman houses, but lighter and more various, wrought with an art at once so admirable and so homely, with such delicate detail, the lovely little old windows with the soft light shining through to reveal their pattern.

The musically voiced bells sound the hour from the great church, rich in beauty and tradition, and we walk across the market-place, this side the castle hill — the hill which held for six hundred years the precious jewelled crucifix, with the splinter of the 'True Cross' in its secret recess, a careless English queen once lost from her neck — towards our quiet inn, a real museum of interesting things fittingly housed, for supper of Suffolk ham and country ale, and then to bed, before the long walk of the morrow.

OCTOBER 14: The Raphaels and the Peruginos are now ranged side by side along a great wall of the National Gallery. I am able more clearly than ever to realise how much more the early master appeals to me than his greater pupil. I well remember how, as a boy of fifteen, in the old National Gallery, I would linger long before Raphael's 'Saint Catherine.' There was no picture in the whole gallery that appealed to my youthful brain as that picture appealed, with its seductive blend of feminine grace and heavenly aspiration. But a little later the glory of Rubens suddenly broke on my vision. I could never look again with

the same eyes on Raphael. By an intellectual effort I can appreciate the gracious plenitude of his accomplishment, his copious facility, his immense variety, the beauty of his draughtsmanship, and the felicity of his decorative design. But all this self-conscious skill, this ingenious affectation, this ostentatious muscularity, this immense superficiality — I feel always now a spiritual vacuity behind it which leaves me cold and critical. Every famous achievement of Raphael's, when I come upon it for the first time, repels me with a fresh shock of disillusionment. I am unpleasantly reminded of Andrea del Sarto and even of lesser men; I see the frescoes of Vasari in the distance. It is all the work of a divinely gifted youth who swiftly ran to waste, carrying with him all the art of his day and land to the same fatal abyss.

But the art of Perugino is still solid and beautiful, immutably serene. It radiates peace and strength. I neither criticise nor admire; my attitude is much more nearly that of worship, not of Perugino's images, but of a far-away ineffable mystery, which he in his time humbly sought to make a little more symbolically visible to men than any that came before him. For here we are in the presence of a great tradition which a long series of artists have in succession wrought, each adding a little that expressed the noblest insight of his own soul at its highest and best moments, and the newest acquirement of his technical skill. Raphael broke up painting, as later on Beethoven broke up music. Not that that blow destroyed the possibility of rare and wonderful developments in special directions. But painting and music alike lost for ever the radiant beauty of their prime and its unconscious serenity.

In a certain sense, if one thinks, it is the ripeness of Raphael's perfection which falls short of Perfection. In all Perfection that satisfies we demand the possibility of a Beyond which enfolds a further Perfection. It is not the fully blown rose which entrances us, but rather that which in its half-blown

loveliness suggests a Perfection which no full-blown rose ever reached. In that the rose is the symbol of all vitally beautiful things. Raphael is the full-blown rose; the only Beyond is Dissolution and the straggling of faded petals.

OCTOBER 17: 'War, that simple-looking word which lightly comes tripping from the lips of unthinking men, and even women.' So writes a famous war correspondent, a man in the midst of war and telling of war as it really is. Now hear a woman war correspondent, writing about this same war: 'I was so proud to see the first gun fired on Wednesday.... I liked to hear the shells swishing.... To women keen on this war it seems almost too good to be true.' That is not an extract from one of the poignant satires of Janson. This woman, who writes of war as a girl might write of her first long frock, is an actual woman, a war correspondent, with a special permit to be at the front. We are told, moreover, that she is, at the same time, actively nursing the wounded in the hospital.

To those psychologists who like large generalisations, how this figure must appeal as a type of the ancient conventional conception of what women are supposed to be — Incarnate Devils, Angels of Mercy, blended together.

OCTOBER 18: Stanley Hall has lately pointed out how much we have lost by eliminating the Devil from our theology. He is the inseparable Companion of God, and when faith in the Devil grows dim God fades away. Not only has the Devil been the Guardian of innocent pleasure, of the theatre, of dancing, of sports, Hall observes, but he preserved the virility of God. 'Ought not we to rehabilitate and reinstall the Devil?'

There is much psychological truth in this contention, even for those who are not concerned, with Stanley Hall, for the maintenance of orthodox Christian theology. By eliminating one of the Great Persons from our theology we not only emasculate, we dissolve it. We cannot with impunity pick and choose what we will dispense with and what we will preserve in our traditional myths. Let us take another sacred myth, as it may well have been, 'Jack and the Bean Stalk.' Suppose that our refined civilised impulses lead us to reject Jack, the reckless, mischievous, and irresponsible youth, who, after a brief but discreditable career on earth, climbed up into the clouds and fraudulently deprived the Great Giant in the sky of his most precious possessions. But if the revolted moral sense rejects Jack, is it likely that even the Great Giant himself will much longer retain our faith?

In any case it must still be said that mere grandeur, creativeness, the apotheosis of virtue and benevolence, fail to constitute an adequate theological symbol for the complex human animal. Man needs to deify not only his moments of moral subjection and rectitude, but his moments of orgy and revolt. He has attained the height of civilisation, not along the one line only, but along both lines, and we cannot even be sure that the virtue line is the most important. Even the Puritan Milton ('a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it,' as Blake said) made Satan the real hero of his theological epic, while the austere Carducci addressed a famous ode to Satan as the creator of human civilisation. And if you suspect that European culture may be only an eccentric aberration, then let us wander to the other side of the world, and we find, for instance, that the great Hawaiian goddess Kapo had a double life — now an angel of grace and beauty, now a demon of darkness and lust. Every profound vision of the world must recognise these two equally essential aspects of Nature and of Man; every vital religion must em-

body both aspects in superb and ennobling symbols. A religion can no more afford to degrade its Devil than to degrade its God.

That is the error Christianity fell into at last. There can be no doubt that the Christian Devil had grown quite impossible, and his disappearance was imperative. Neither Milton nor Carducci could keep him alive. His palmy days were in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, before the Renaissance had grown powerful enough to influence European life. Even during those palmy days he exercised a power that for the most part was not virile, but crushing and inhuman. It has been set forth in Dr. Paul Carus's *History of the Devil*. In the light of such a history as that I doubt much whether even Professor Stanley Hall himself would lift a finger to bring the Devil back among us again.

OCTOBER 22: Gaby Deslys is just now a great attraction at the Palace Theatre. One is amused to note how this very Parisian person and her very Parisian performance are with infinite care adapted to English needs, and attuned to this comfortably respectable, not to say stolidly luxurious, house. We are shown a bedroom with a bed in it, and a little dressing-room by the side. Her task is to undress and go to bed. It is the sort of scene that may be seen anywhere in any music-hall all over Europe. But in the capital city of British propriety, and in a music-hall patronised by Royalty, this delicate task is surrounded and safeguarded by infinite precautions. One seems to detect that the scene has been rehearsed before a committee of ambiguously mixed composition. One sees the care with which they determined the precise moment at which the electric light should be switched off in the dressing-room; one realises their firm decision that the lady must, after all, go to bed fully clothed.

One is conscious throughout of a careful anxiety that every avenue to 'suggestiveness' shall be just hinted and at once decently veiled. There is something unpleasant, painful, degrading in this ingenious mingling of prurience and prudery. The spectators, if they think of it at all, must realise that throughout the whole trivial performance their emotions are being basely played upon, and yet that they are being treated with an insulting precaution which would be more in place in a lunatic asylum than in a gathering of presumably responsible men and women. In the end one is made to feel how far more purifying and ennobling than this is the spectacle of absolute nakedness, even on the stage, yes, even on the stage.

And my thoughts go back to the day, less than two years ago, when for the first time this was clearly brought home to me by a performance — like this and yet so unlike — in a very different place, the simple, bare, almost sordid Teatro Gaiarre. Most of the turns were of the same ordinary sort that might be seen in many another music-hall of the long Calle Marques del Duero. But at the end came on a performer who was, I soon found, of altogether another order. The famous Bianca Stella, as the programme announced, shortly to start on her South American tour, was appearing for a limited number of nights. I had never heard of Bianca Stella. She might, to look at, be Austrian, and one could imagine, from some of her methods, that she was a pupil of Isadora Duncan. She was certainly a highly trained and accomplished artist; though peculiarly fitted for her part by Nature, still an artist, not a child of Nature.

Of fine and high type, tall and rather slim, attractive in face, almost faultless in proportion and detail, playing her difficult part with unfailing dignity and grace, Bianca Stella might in general type be a Bohemian out of Stratz's *Schönheit des weiblichen Körpers*, or even an aristocratic young Englishwoman. She comes on fully dressed, like Gaby Deslys, but

with no such luxurious environment, and slowly disrobes, dancing all the while, one delicate garment at a time, until only a gauzy chemise is left and she flings herself on the bed. Then she rises, fastens on a black mantle which floats behind concealing nothing, at the same moment removing her chemise. There is now no concealment left save by a little close-fitting triangular shield of spangled silver, as large as the palm of her hand, fastened round her waist by an almost invisible cord, and she dances again with her beautiful, dignified air. Once more, this time in the afternoon, I went to see Bianca Stella dance. Now there was a dark curtain as a background. She came on with a piece of simple white drapery wound round her body; as she dances she unfolds it, holds it behind her as she dances, finally flings it away, dancing with her fleckless and delicately proportioned body before the dark curtain. Throughout the dances her dignity and grace, untouched by voluptuous appeal and yet always human, remained unfailing. Other dancers who came on before her, clothed dancers, had been petulantly wanton to their hearts' desire. Bianca Stella seemed to belong to another world. As she danced, when I noted the spectators, I could see here and there a gleam in the eyes of coarse faces, though there was no slightest movement or gesture or look of the dancer to evoke it. For these men Bianca Stella had danced in vain, for — it remains symbolically true — only the pure in heart can see God. To see Bianca Stella truly was to realise that it is not desire but a sacred awe which nakedness inspires, an intoxication of the spirit rather than of the senses, no flame of lust, but rather a purifying and exalting fire. To feel otherwise has merely been the unhappy privilege of men intoxicated by the stifling and unwholesome air of modern artificiality. To the natural man, always and everywhere, even to-day, nakedness has in it a power of divine terror, which ancient men throughout the world crystallised into beautiful rites, so that when a

woman unveiled herself it seemed to them that thunderstorms were silenced, and that noxious animals were killed, and that vegetation flourished, and that all the powers of evil were put to flight. That was their feeling, and, absurd as it may seem to us, a right and natural instinct lay beneath it. Some day, perhaps, a new moral reformer, a great apostle of purity, will appear among us, having his scourge in his hand, and enter our theatres and music-halls to purge them. Since I have seen Bianca Stella, I know something of what he will do. It is not nakedness that he will cast out. It will more likely be clothes.

So it is that when I contemplate Gaby Deslys or her sort, it is of Bianca Stella that I think.

NOVEMBER 1: 'The way to spiritual life,' wrote George Meredith in one of his recently published letters, 'lies in the complete unfolding of the creature, not in the nipping of his passions. . . . To the flourishing of the spirit, then, through the healthy exercise of the senses!'

Yes, all that is very good, I heartily subscribe. And yet, and yet, there lingers a certain hesitation; one vaguely feels that, as a complete statement of the matter, it hardly satisfies all the demands of to-day. George Meredith belonged to the early Victorian period which had encased its head in a huge bonnet and girdled its loins with a stiff crinoline. His function was to react vitally to that state of things, and he performed his function magnificently, evoking, of course, from the *Ordeal of Richard Feverel* onwards, a doubtless salutary amount of scandal and amazement. The time demanded that its preachers should take their text from the spiritually excessive Blake: 'Damn braces, bless relaxes.' On that text, throughout his life, Meredith heroically and eloquently preached.

But nowadays that seems a long time ago. The great preacher of to-day cannot react against the attraction to braces, for it no longer exists. We are all quite ready to 'damn braces.' The moralist, therefore, may now legitimately hold the balance fair and firm, without giving it a little pressure in one direction for wholesome ends of admonition.

When we so look at the matter we have to realise that, biologically and morally alike, healthy restraint is needed for 'the flourishing of the spirit' quite as much as healthy exercise; that bracing as well as relaxing is part of the soul's hygiene; that the directive force of a fine asceticism, exerted towards positive and not towards negative ends, is an essential part of life itself.

You might say that a fountain that leaps largely and exquisitely up towards the sky only needs freedom and space. But no, it also needs compression and force, a mighty restrained energy at its roots, of which it is the gay and capricious flower. That, you may say, is not really a vital thing. But take a real flower, the same mechanism is still at work. The flexible convolvulus that must cling to any support from which to expand its delicate bells needs not only freedom to expand but much more the marvellous energy that was wound up and confined, like a spring, in the seed. It will find its own freedom, but it will not find its own force.

Therefore let us hold the moral balance fair and firm. The utmost freedom, the utmost restraint, we need them both. They are two aspects of the same thing. We cannot have freedom in any triumphant degree unless we have restraint. The main point is, that we should not fossilise either our freedoms or our restraints. Every individual needs — harmoniously with the needs of other individuals — the freedoms and restraints his own nature demands. Every age needs new

freedoms and new restraints. In the making of New Freedoms and New Restraints lies the rhythm of Life.

NOVEMBER 11: The psychology of the crowd is interesting, even when it is an educated and well-fed crowd. I take up the newspaper and see the announcement of a 'momentous' declaration by the Premier at a Lord Mayor's banquet at the Guildhall. I have the curiosity to read, and I find it to be that the 'victors are not to be robbed of the fruits which have cost them so dear.' This declaration was followed by 'loud and prolonged cheers,' as evidently the speaker, being a sagacious lawyer, knew it would be when he chose to put his declaration into this cynical shape, as an appeal to mob feeling, rather than in the form of a statement concerning the rights of the case, whatever the rights may be. Yet not one of those rapturous applauders would for a moment have tolerated that doctrine if it had been proposed to apply it to his own possessions. As the mob they applaud what as individuals they would disclaim with such moral energy as they might be capable of. The spectacle of the big robber is always impressive, and the most respectable of mobs is carried away by it. 'Who was ever a pirate for millions?' as Raleigh protested to Bacon.

If we imagine the 'victors' in this case to have been on a rather smaller scale the enthusiasm of the Guildhall mob would have been considerably damped. Let us imagine they were a band of burglars who had broken in the night before and carried off the materials for the forthcoming banquet, leaving one of the band behind dead and two wounded. When the guests seated at the bare board heard the emphatic declaration that the victors are not to be robbed of 'the fruits which have cost them so dear,' would they have raised quite such 'loud and prolonged cheers'?

NOVEMBER 12: The Divine Ironist who surely rules the world seldom leaves Himself without witness. On Lord Mayor's Day this witness appeared in the form of an ignorant ruffian. Within a few yards of the Mansion House, within a few hours of that 'momentous declaration' which followed the turtle soup, in Liverpool Street — a street crowded not with ruffians but with business people and bankers' clerks, all the people who carry on the daily routine of civilisation — a man of the people smashed a jeweler's window and flung the jewelry into the street, shouting 'Help yourselves.' And they helped themselves. In a brief terrific scramble several hundred pounds' worth of jewelry was seized. Two men only of this respectable crowd brought what they had secured into the shop; the rest decamped with the booty. They had scarcely had time to read the 'momentous declaration.' But they agreed with it. They were not to be 'robbed of the fruits which had cost them so dear.'

Clearly, again, the Premier had rightly gauged the moral capacities of the mob. We sometimes think that the fundamental instincts of the crowd are, after all, sound; leave them to themselves and they will do the right thing. But, on the other hand, those who despise and condemn the mob will always have a sadly large amount of evidence to support their case, even in the most 'respectable' centres of civilisation.

NOVEMBER 20: The Archbishop of Canterbury, I understand, has publicly expressed his approval of the application of the lash to those persons who are engaged in the so-called 'White Slave Traffic.' There is always a certain sociological interest in the public utterances of an Archbishop of Canterbury. He is a great State official who automatically registers the level of the public opinion of the respectable classes. The futility for deterrence or reform

of the lash or other physical torture as applied to adults has long been a commonplace of historical criminology, and Collas, the standard historian of flagellation, pointing out that the lash can at best only breed the virtues of slavery, declares that 'the history of flagellation is that of a moral bankruptcy.' Moreover, criminals who are engaged in low-grade commercial affairs, with the large lure that makes them worth while, can usually arrange that the lash should fall on a subordinate's shoulders. It has been ascertained that the 'capitalised value' of the average prostitute is nearly four times as great as that of the average respectable working-girl; how many lashes will alter that? But the sadistic impulse, in all its various degrees, is independent of facts. Of late it appears to have been rising. Now it has reached that percentage of the respectable population which automatically puts the archiepiscopal apparatus in motion. For an Archbishop of Canterbury has a public function to perform (has not Sydney Smith described a 'foolometer'?) altogether independent of such reasonable and human functions as he may privately perform.

Is this love of torture, by the way, possibly one of the fruits of Empire? We see it in the Roman Empire, too, and how vigorously it was applied to Christians and other criminals. *Christianos ad leones!* But it was a disastrously unsuccessful policy — or we should not have an Archbishop of Canterbury with us now.

No disrespect for Archbishops of Canterbury is involved in this recognition of their public function, and I have no wish to be (as Laud wrote of one of my ancestors) 'a very troublesome man' to archbishops. They act automatically for the measurement of society, merely in the same sense as an individual is automatically acting for the measurement of himself when he states how profoundly he admires Mendelssohn or R. L. Stevenson. He thereby registers the par-

ticular degree of his own spiritual state. And when an Archbishop of Canterbury, with all that sensitiveness to the atmosphere which his supreme office involves, publicly Professes an Opinion, he is necessarily registering a particular degree in the Spiritual State of Society. It is an important function which was never vouchsafed to his Master.

One wonders how many centuries it is since an Archbishop of Canterbury was known to express any public opinion on non-ecclesiastical affairs which was not that of the great majority of Respectable People. Of course in ecclesiastical matters, and in political matters which are ecclesiastical, he is professionally bound; and Beckett and Sudbury and Laud — though one was a victim to the hostility of a King, another to the hostility of the lower class, and the third to the middle class — were all faithful to the death to their profession and their class, as an Archbishop is bound to be even when his profession and his class are in the minority; I speak of the things to which he is not so bound. I have no doubt that at some recent period an Archbishop has archiepiscopally blessed the Temperance Movement. He is opposed to drunkenness, because we all are, even Licensed Victuallers, and because drunkenness is fast dying out. But imagine an Archbishop of Canterbury preaching Temperance in the eighteenth century when nearly every one was liable to be drunk! He would have been mistaken for a Methodist. I must confess it would be to me a great satisfaction to find an Archbishop of Canterbury earnestly pleading in the House of Lords in favour of gambling, or the unrestricted opening of public-houses on Sunday, or some relaxation in the prosecution of pornographic literature. Not by any means that I should agree with his point of view. But the spectacle offered of a morally courageous and intellectually independent Archbishop of Canterbury would be so stimulating, the presence of a Live Person at the head of the Church

instead of a glorified Penny-in-the-Slot Machine would be so far-reaching in its results, that all questions of agreement and disagreement would sink into insignificance.

DECEMBER 5: I think we underestimate our ancestors' regard for ease. Whenever I have occasion to go to my 'Jacobean' chest of drawers (chests of this type are said really to belong to the end of the seventeenth century) the softness and ease with which the drawers run always gives me a slight thrill of pleasure. They run on grooves along the side of each drawer, so that they can never catch, and when one examines them one finds that grease, now black with age, had been applied to the grooves. (In chests which have passed through the dealers' hands it is not usually easy to find traces of this grease.) The chests of modified 'Jacobean' type — belonging, one may suppose, to the early eighteenth century — still show these grooves for the drawers to run on. And then, as the eighteenth century advances, they are no longer found. But that by no means meant that the eighteenth-century craftsman had resolved to be content with such articles of furniture as millions of our patient contemporaries tug and push and more or less mildly curse at. No, the eighteenth-century craftsman said to himself: I have gone beyond those 'Jacobean' fellows; I can make drawers so accurately, so exquisitely fitted, that they no longer need grooves, and move as well as though they had them. And he was justified. A beautiful eighteenth-century chest of drawers really is almost as easy to manipulate as my 'Jacobean' chest. One realises that the device of grooves, ingenious and successful as it was, rested on an imperfection; it was evidently an effort to overcome the crude and heavy work of earlier imperfect craftsmen.

There is evolution in the vital progress of furniture as in all other vital progress. The Jacobean chest with its oak substance and its panels and its great depth is apparently massive; this is an inherited ancestral trait due to the fact that it developed out of the earlier coffers that really were massive; in reality it is rather light. The later modified Jacobean chest shows only an attenuated appearance of massiveness, and the loss is real, for there are no fresh compensating qualities. But the developed eighteenth-century walnut chest is the unmistakable expression of a new feeling in civilisation, a new feeling of delicacy and refinement, a lovely superficiality such as civilisation demands, alike in furniture and in social intercourse. There is not even the appearance of massiveness now; the panels have gone and the depth has been notably reduced. The final goal of development was reached, and nothing was left to the nineteenth century but degeneration.

An interesting evolution in details is instructive to note. In the Jacobean chest, while the drooping loops of the handles are small and simple, the keyholes are elaborately adorned with beautiful brass scroll-work, the hereditary vestige of mediæval days when the chest was a coffer, and the key, insistently demanded for security, was far more important than handles, which then indeed had no existence. In the unsatisfactory transitional stage of the later Jacobean chest the keyhole is less beautifully adorned, but the handles remain of similar type. Here, again, the eighteenth-century craftsman shows the fine artist he was. He instinctively felt that the handles must be developed, for not only were they more functionally important than the lock had become, but in dispensing with the grooves for the drawers to run on he had made necessary a somewhat firmer grip. So he made his handles more solid and fastened them in with beautifully cut fingers of brass. Then he realised that the keyhole with

all its fine possibilities must be sacrificed because it clashed with his handles and produced a distracting confusion. He contented himself with a simple narrow rim of brass for his keyholes, and the effect is perfectly right.

Furniture is the natural expression of the civilisation producing it. I sometimes think that there is even an intimate relation between the furniture of an epoch and its other art forms, even its literary style. The people who delighted in Cowley used these Jacobean chests, and in his style there is precisely the same blending of the seemingly massive and the really light, a blending perhaps more incongruous in poetry than in furniture. And the eighteenth-century chests were made for people who had been penetrated by the spirit of the *Spectator*; their craftsmen put into furniture precisely that exquisite superficiality, that social amenity, that fine conventionism which Addison and Steele put into their essays. I find it hard not to believe that delicate feminine hands once stored away the *Spectator* in these drawers, and sometimes think I have seen those hands on the canvases of Gainsborough and Romney.

DECEMBER 7: One is perhaps too easily disquieted by the incompetence and disaster of our typically modern things. Rotten aeroplanes for fools to ride to destruction, motor-cars for drunkards and imbeciles to use as the ancient war-chariots were used, telephones and a thousand other devices which are always out of order — our civilisation after all is not made up of these. I take up *Le Rire* and I gaze at its coloured pictures again and again. One realises that these are the things that people will turn to when they think of the twentieth century. Our aeroplanes and our motor-cars and our telephones will no doubt be carefully displayed in a neglected cellar of their museums. But here are

things they will cherish and admire, and as one gazes at them one grows more at peace with one's own time.

It is easy to detect the influence of Rowlandson and of Hiroshige and the other Japanese designers in the methods of these French artists of to-day, and there could be no better influences. Rowlandson's *Dr. Syntax* was the delight of my childhood, and is equally a solace to-day when I am better able to understand what that great artist accomplished; Hiroshige's daring and lovely visions of some remote Japanese fairyland are always consoling to take out and gaze at when one is weary or depressed or disgusted. There could be no better influences.

But while it is not difficult to detect such influences in *Le Rire's* best artists at their best moments — not so very often attained — they are yet always themselves and true to their own spirit and vision, or they would have no message to deliver. These pictures have their supreme value because, whether or not they are a true picture of French life, they are a true presentation of the essential French spirit, so recklessly gay and so daringly poignant, so happily exquisite in its methods, and so relentlessly direct in its moral. For some people, who take what they are able to receive, the French spirit seems trivial and superficial, merely wanton and gay, chiefly characterised by that Lubricity which worried the pedagogic Matthew Arnold. The French spirit is more specifically distinguished by its profundity and its seriousness. Without profundity and seriousness, indeed, gaiety and wantonness have no significance. If the Seven Sins had not been Deadly the Christian Church could never have clothed them in garments of tragic dignity. Unless you cut deep into life, wantonness and gaiety lose their savour and are not fit for the ends of art. The French spirit is not only embodied in Rabelais and Montaigne and Molière — if these are your superficial men! — but also in Pascal. Was there so great a

gulf between Pascal and Daumier? And I find not only the spirit of Pascal in some of these pictures in *Le Rire*, but sometimes even his very phrases used as the titles of them.

DECEMBER 9: The Australians, it appears, have been much worried over Chidley. Here was a man who would not fit into their conventional moulds. He was stern, resolute, inflexible, convinced that he carried a Gospel which Australia and the world at large needed. It was a Gospel so eccentrically related to the accepted scheme of things that only he himself could accept it in its entirety. His method of preaching this gospel, moreover, was as eccentric as the gospel itself. It seemed to him that men need to live closer to Nature, that a simple diet is necessary to salvation, and less clothing, and greater sexual continence. He approved his gospel by being a model of physical muscular fitness. As I have sometimes seen a Rifian from the hills, with bare magnificent limbs, striding down from the heights carolling a song, to enter the bastardly-civilised city of Tangier, so, it would seem, Chidley descended on to the city of Sydney. Having written a book in which to contain the pith of his message, he proceeded to clothe himself in a sort of scanty bathing dress, to lecture the public in the most fashionable streets of the city, and to sell his book to those who might desire it.

Three centuries ago a man of the same type as Chidley, the eminent Quaker, Solomon Eccles, who had his gospel too, would now and then come to Westminster Hall, 'very civilly tied about the privities to avoid scandal' (as Pepys, a great stickler for propriety, noted with satisfaction), to call to repentance the wicked generation of Charles II's day. But the people of that day were not altogether without wisdom. They let the strenuous Quaker alone. He was doubtless the better, and they were none the worse.

Nowadays, it seems, we need more than a loincloth to protect our hyperæsthetic eyes from the Splendour of Nature. The Australians, afflicted by our modern nervous fussiness, could not leave Chidley alone. The police moved him on, worried him as well as they could, invented reasons for locking him up now and then, and finally, by what seemed a master stroke, they persuaded the doctors to shut him up in the Asylum. That, however, proved to be too much for Australian popular opinion. The voice of the people began to be heard in the press; there were long debates in Parliament; the Premier sent to the Asylum to inquire on what grounds Chidley had been placed there, and the doctors, who really had no evil intent in the matter, though their mental equilibrium had been momentarily disturbed by this unique Chidley, honourably opened the Asylum doors, and Chidley has returned to preach the Gospel in George Street until new reasons can be puzzled out for harassing him, neurotic, without doubt, but now hall-marked sane.

Like the Athenians of old, the Australians are not averse to hearing some new thing, and they have bought Chidley's book by the thousand. But the Athenians, notwithstanding their love of novelty, offered the cup of hemlock to Socrates. Chidley, if not exactly the Australian Socrates, clearly resembles his disciples, those great Cynics who in the Greek market-places were wont to preach and to practise a philosophy of stern simplicity, often akin to his own. The Athenians killed Socrates, but they produced a Plato to idealise and even to immortalise him. The Australians have drawn the line at killing Chidley. So he still awaits his Plato.

DECEMBER 15: Like a Gargantuan *casserole* outside, but modelled on a kettle inside, the Albert Hall, more or less filled with people, is often to me a de-

lightful spectacle. It is so at this Sunday afternoon concert, when the lights are blended, and the bottom of the kettle is thickspread with humanity, and sprinkled with splashes of dusky crimson or purple on women's hats, while the sides are more slightly spread with the same humanity up to the galleries. The spectacle so fascinates me sometimes that I cannot listen to the music. At such moments the Albert Hall faintly recalls a miniature Spanish bull-ring. It is a far-off resemblance, even farther than the resemblance of Saint Paul's Cathedral, with its enclosed dome and its worrying detail, to the simple and superb strength of the Pantheon, which lives in memory through the years as a great consoling Presence, but it often comes to me and brings with it an inspiring sense of dignity and colour and light before which the actual spectacle grows dim.

JANUARY 3, 1913: I chanced to walk along the village street behind two little girls of the people, evidently sisters, with ribbons round their uncovered heads, filleting the hair which fell in careless ringlets on their backs. It was hair of the bright flaxen sort, which the poets have conventionally called 'golden,' the hair one sees so often on the angels of the Italian primitive painters — though not so often on living Italians. It is the hair which always seems to me more beautiful than any other, and I felt as if I wanted to follow these plain commonplace children as the rats followed the Pied Piper.

The vision brought to my mind the fact I have so often had occasion to realise, that æsthetic attraction has nothing to do with erotic attraction, however at their origins, it may have been, the two attractions were identical or sprang from the same source, and though they have constantly reacted on, and sometimes deflected, each other. Æsthetically this hair

fascinates me; it is an exhilarating delight whenever I meet it. But I have never felt any personal attraction in association with this hair, or any great personal interest in the people it belonged to.

What one æsthetically craves is the outcome of one set of influences, due to one's special vision, one's traditions, one's training and environment, influences that are no doubt mainly objective and impersonal, operative on most of one's fellows. But what one personally craves is the outcome of another set of influences, due to one's peculiar and instinctive organic constitution; it is based on one's individual instinctive needs and may not be precisely the same for any two persons.

The Æstheticians are not here indeed altogether in harmony. But it would seem that, while the æsthetic and the sexual must frequently and legitimately overlap, they are definitely separate, that it is possible to distinguish the æsthetically from the sexually attractive in different persons and even in different features of the same person, that while it is frequently natural and right to love a 'beautiful' woman, to love a woman because she is beautiful is as unreasonable as to fall in love with a beautiful statue. The æsthetically attractive and the sexually attractive tend to be held apart. They are two different 'substances,' as the mediæval metaphysician would have said. From the standpoint of clear thinking, and also of social well-being, the confusion of them is, in theological language, damnable. In so far as Beauty is a personal lust it is unfit for wholesome social ends. Only in so far as it is lifted above personal desire is it fitted to become a social inspiration.

JANUARY 10: Yesterday I waited for a friend at a London Underground railway station. She was delayed, and I stood for a quarter of an hour at the bottom of a flight of steps, watching the continuous stream of descending passengers, mostly women, and generally young. Some among the less young were swollen, heavy, and awkward; most were slack, drooping, limp, bony, or bent; a few were lithe and lissom; one or two had the emotional vivacity and muscular tone of abounding vitality. Not one plainly indicated that, stripped of her clothing, she would have transformed those Underground steps into the Golden Stairway of Heaven.

‘The average civilised woman sags.’ That is the conclusion lately reached by Dickinson and Truslow after the examination of a very large number of American women, and it is a conclusion which applies without doubt far beyond the limits of the United States. Her breasts droop down, these investigators assert, her buttocks sweep low, her abdomen protrudes. While these defects are general, the modern woman has cultivated two extreme and opposite defects of physical carriage which Dickinson and Truslow picturesquely describe as the Kangaroo Type and the Gorilla Type. In the kangaroo type of civilised woman the upper part of the trunk is carried too much in front of the line of gravity, and the lower part too much behind that line. In the gorilla type of woman, on the contrary, the upper part of the body is carried too much behind the line of gravity, and the lower part too much in front. So far Dickinson and Truslow.

If this were a purely æsthetic matter, though it would still have its importance, it would only intrude to a slight degree into the moral and social sphere. We should simply have to recognise that these defects of the modern woman must be a frequent cause of depression to her more intimate friends, and that that may have its consequences.

There is more in it than that. All such defects of tone and

posture (as indeed Dickinson and Truslow realise) have their inevitable reaction on the nervous system: they produce a constant wearing stress, a perpetual liability to pain. The women who have fallen into these habits are inadequate to life, and their inadequacy is felt in all that they are and in all that they attempt to do. Each of them is a stone flung into the social pool to disperse around it an ever-widening circle of disturbance and irritation.

It may be argued that one has seen women — working-women especially — whose breasts were firm bowls of beauty, whose buttocks were exquisitely curved, whose bellies would have satisfied the inspired author of *The Song of Songs*, and yet the women who owned such physical graces have not conspicuously possessed the finer spiritual graces. But we do not enhance one half of human perfection by belittling the other half. And we rarely conceive of any high perfection on one side without some approach to it on the other. Even Jesus — though the whole of his story demands that his visage should be more marred than any man's — is always pictured as beautiful. And do you suppose that the slave girl Blandina would have gone into the arena at Lyons to present her white body as the immortal symbol of the love of Jesus if her breasts had drooped down, and her buttocks swept low, and her abdomen protruded? The human heart is more subtly constructed. Those romantic Christian hagiologists saw to that. And — to come nearer to the point — could her fine tension of soul have been built up on a body as dissolute and weak as a candle in the sun?

We need to-day a great revival of the sense of responsibility, not only in the soul but in the body. We want a new sort of *esprit de corps*. We need it especially for women, for women, under modern conditions, even less than men, have no use for sagging bodies or sagging souls. It is only by the sanction of nakedness that this can be achieved. 'Take this hint from

the dancer,' a distinguished American dancer has said, 'the fewer clothes the better; woman is clumsy because she is overweighted with clothes.' With whatever terror we may view any general claim to the right of nakedness, the mere liability to nakedness, the mere freedom to be naked, at once introduces a new motive into life. It becomes a moralising force of the most strenuous urgency. Clothes can no more be put before us as a substitute for the person. The dressmaker can no longer arrogate the functions of a Creator. The way is opened for the appearance in civilisation of a real human race.

JANUARY 11: There seem to be two extreme and opposed styles of writing: the liquid style that flows, and the bronze or marmoreal style that is moulded or carved. Thus there is in English the style of Jeremy Taylor and Newman and Ruskin, and there is the style of Bacon and Landor and Pater, the lyrically impetuous men and the artistically deliberate men.

One may even say that a whole language may fall into one or the other of these two groups, according to the temper of the people which created it. There is the Greek tongue, for instance, and there is the Latin tongue. Greek is the embodiment of the fluent speech that runs or soars, the speech of a people which could not help giving winged feet to its god of art. Latin is the embodiment of the weighty and concentrated speech which is hammered and pressed and polished into the shape of its perfection, as the ethically minded Romans believed that the soul also should be wrought. Virgil said that he licked his poems into shape as a she-bear licks her cubs, and Horace, the other supreme literary artist of Rome, compared the writing of poems to working in bronze. No Greek could have said these things. Whether Plato or

Aristophanes or even Thucydides, the Greek's feet touched the earth, touched it lovingly, though it might only be with the pressure of a toe, but there were always wings to his feet, he was always the embodiment of all that he symbolised in Hermes. The speech of the Greek flies, but the speech of the Roman sinks. The Roman's word in art, as in life, was still *gravitas*, and he contrived to infuse a shade of contempt into the word *levis*. With the inspired Greek we rise, with the inspired Roman we sink. With the Greek poet, it may be any poet of the Anthology, I am uplifted, I am touched by the breath of rapture. But if it is a Latin poet — Lucretius or Catullus, the quintessential Latin poets — I am hit by something pungent and poignant (they are really the same word, one notes, and that a Latin word) which pierces the flesh and sinks into the heart.

One resents the narrow and defective intelligence of the spirit embodied in Latin, its indifference to Nature, its refusal to hallow the freedom and beauty and gaiety of things, its ever-recurring foretaste of Christianity. But one must not refuse to recognise the superb and eternal morality of that spirit, whether in language or in life. It consecrates struggle, the conquest of brute matter, the perpetual and patient effort after perfection. So Rome is an everlasting challenge to the soul of Man, and the very stones of its city the mightiest of inspirations.

JANUARY 13: An American physician, we are told, paid a visit to the famous dog-kennels on the Vanderbilt estate. He was surprised at the intelligence and gentleness of the animals. 'Have you no vicious animals at all?' he asked. And the keeper in surprise answered him: 'Do you suppose we would be so foolish as to permit vicious animals to breed?'

Human beings ought surely to be worth more to us than dogs. Yet here in England — and I do not know in what ‘civilised’ country any different order prevails — we gather together all our physical and moral defectives, we bring them into our Workhouses to have babies, under the superintendence of Boards of Guardians, and every one knows that these babies are born in the image of their parents, and will perpetuate the same cycle of misery. Yet, so far as I know, not one of these ‘Guardians’ ever so much as attempts to make clear to those hapless mothers why and how they should avoid having other children. And no one proposes to shut up as dangerous lunatics these precious Guardians of Private Misery and Public Incapacity!

We look down with lofty moral superiority on our ancestors in these islands who were accustomed to eat their fellow-creatures. We do not eat them. We only torture them. That is what we call Progress. At all events we are laying up a bountiful supply of moral superiority for our own descendants. It is not probable that they will be able to read in their newspaper (if newspaper they will still possess) as we can in ours: ‘At an inquest at Dudley yesterday on a woman who was fatally scalded whilst in a fit, it was stated that she had been an epileptic for years, and that her seven children had all been epileptics, and all had died when young.’

JANUARY 14: There are few things that make one so doubtful about the civilising power of England as our indifference to the smoke problem in London. If we were Neapolitan ragamuffins, who could lie in the sun with bare limbs, sucking oranges, there would be nothing to say; under such conditions indolence might be pardonable, almost justified. But we English are feverishly active, we run over the whole world, and we utilise all this energy to build up the

biggest and busiest city in the world. Yet we have never created an atmosphere for our great city. Mist is beautiful, with its power of radiant transformation, and London could never, under any circumstances, and need never, be absolutely without mist; it is part of the physical genius of our land, and even perhaps of the spiritual genius of our people. But the black fogs of London are mist soaked with preventable coal smoke; their evils have been recognised from the first. Evelyn protested against this 'hellish and dismal cloud of sea-coal,' and Charles II desired Evelyn to prepare a Bill on this nuisance to put before Parliament. But there the matter rested. For three centuries we have been in the position of the Russian gentleman who could not prevent his dilapidated roof from letting in the rain; for, as he pointed out, in wet weather it was quite impossible to effect any repairs, and in dry weather there was really nothing to complain of. In the mean while this 'cloud of sea-coal' has continued to produce not only actual death and injury in particular cases, but a general diminution of human vitality and the wholesale destruction of plant life. It eats away our most beautiful public buildings; it covers everything and everybody with soot; it is responsible, directly and indirectly, for a financial loss so vast and manifold as to be incalculable.

Yesterday Lord Curzon delivered an address at the Mansion House on the Beautiful London of the Future. He dwelt eloquently on its noble buildings and its long embankments, and its wide streets and its finely placed statues. But of the smoke which nullifies and destroys all these things, not a word! Yet, as he was speaking, outside the Mansion House the people of London were almost feeling their way about, scarce knowing where they were, timidly crawling across motor-infested roads with their hearts in their mouths, all the time permanently ingraining their lungs with black filth. An able man, Lord Curzon, skilful to gauge the British Idealist,

ever so absorbed in his own dream of comfort or of cash that he is even blind to the world he lives in, 'pinnacled dim in the intense inane' in another sense than the poet intended.

If we were mediæval monks, who spent our time chanting the rhyme of Bernard of Morlaix, there might seem to be a reason in our madness. To make a Hell of earth is doubtless a useful method of rendering more joyous the transition to Heaven, and less overwhelming the transition to Purgatory. Yet the mediæval monks burnt no coal and were careful to live in beautiful sites and fine air. The prospect of Purgatory made them epicures in the fine things of Earth. Now we, apparently, care not a snap for any Hereafter. It is therefore a curious psychological problem why we should have chosen to take up our cross in this peculiarly repulsive shape. Apparently our traditions are too strong for us, we cannot dispense with Hell; if robbed of it in the future we must have it Here and Now.

JANUARY 15: When English days are dark and dreary, and the rain falls, and cold winds blow, then it is that memory brings back the full joy of ancient beauty and sunshine. (How could Dante have written 'Nessun maggior dolore'? But he had to write of Hell, and Hell were no longer Hell if the lovely memory of Earth still cheered its inmates.) Especially I love to think of that two days' brief journey — the most delightful journey there can be in the world, it sometimes seems — which separates me from Spain. I think of it as it is in early Spring, in the April month, when Brown-ing longed to be in England and most people long to be out of it. I think of the swift passage across the Channel, of the ever-new impression of the light-toned greenery of France and the subtle difference of the beautiful trees, of Paris, of the Quai d'Orsay early next morning, of the mediæval cities that

flash into view on their ancient hills, of the vast stretch of beautiful and varied French land, of Limoges, the last outpost of the Northern French, whom it is sad to leave even when one is bound for Spain, of Rocamadour (and I think of that fantastic Old-World shrine, with the legendary blade of Roland's Durandel still struck into its walls, and of the long delicious day on the solitary brooding height over the exquisite ravine), the night at Toulouse at the Hotel Bayard, and the sour bread that marks the Puritanic Southern French, the keen winds and the dreary rain that comes from Provence — delicious to leave behind. Then Carcassonne and the momentary vision of its turrets, the embodiment of one's dream of the past; lunch at Narbonne with the unfailing cold asparagus of the south, Perpignan, where now at last one is haunted by the fragrance of a city that once was Spanish. Then creeping along by the broken coast, and the rocky creeks up to the outermost edge of the Pyrenees, leaving to the north the ancient path which Pompey and Cæsar climbed, and feeling the winds that descend mysteriously from its gorges:

Le vent qui vient à travers la montagne
Me rendra fou.

Lo, at once a new Heaven and a new Earth and a new People. A sky that is ever soft and radiant; a land on which strange and fragrant plants flourish, and lakes of crimson poppies glimmer afar; men and women into whose veins seems to have passed something of the lazy sunshine of their sky, something of the rich colour of their earth. Then at last the great city of Barcelona, where work and play are mingled as nowhere else so harmoniously in the whole European world; and, beyond, the sacred height of Montserrat; and, beyond that, all the magic of Spain at my feet.

JANUARY 19: 'For three days I have observed two large pictures in solid frames hanging on the wall before me, supported by a cord fastened horizontally behind the frames; these pictures have only one point of support, so that they are sensitive to the slightest movement. The wall goes from east to west, or the other way about, it makes no difference. Now, every morning when I wake, I find these works of art a little askew, the left corner inclined down and the right up!' I came upon that passage in *Sylva Sylvarum*, the first book of Strindberg's I ever read, and it pleased me so much that I believe I read no further. I am reminded of it now when Strindberg's fame has grown so great in England.

It really seems to me that that fantastic image is an excellent symbol of Strindberg himself. For his picture of the world fails to swing concordantly with the world. He has lagged behind in the cosmic rhythm, he has fallen out of the dance of the stars. So that the whole universe is to him an exquisitely keen jar of the nerves, and he hangs awry. That may well make him an extraordinarily interesting person, and, indeed, perhaps he is thereby an index of the world's vital movement, registering it by not moving with it. We have to read Strindberg, but to read him *à rebours*.

So I experience some amusement when I see to-day the solemn statement in an American journal which claims — I do not say with no reason — to be portentously clever and superior, that Strindberg is destined to become in America the voice of the masculine reaction in favour of 'the corrective influence of a matter-of-fact attitude towards woman.' One wonders by what strange fatality Strindberg — the most fantastic genius that ever lived — can appeal to an American as 'matter-of-fact.' And one wonders why Americans, anyway, should go to this distinguished Swede for such a 'corrective,' when in their own country, to mention but a single name, they have a writer like Robert Herrick, whose novels

are surely so admirably subtle and profound an analysis of the position of womanhood in America, and quite reasonably sane. But it is still true, as Jesus sighed two thousand years ago, that a prophet is no prophet in his own country.

JANUARY 29: For supper, we are told, Milton used often to eat a few olives. That statement has frequently recurred to my mind. I never grow weary of the significance of little things. What do the so-called great things of life count for in the end, the fashion of a man's showing-off for the benefit of his fellows? It is the little things that give its savour or its bitterness to life, the little things that direct the currents of activity, the little things that alone really reveal the intimate depths of personality. *De minimis non curat lex*. But against that dictum of human law one may place the Elder Pliny's maxim concerning natural law: *Nusquam magis quam in minimis tota est Natura*. For in the sphere of Nature's Laws it is only the minimal things that are worth caring about, the least things in the world, mere specks on the Walls of Life, as it seems to you. But one sets one's eyes to them, and, behold, they are chinks that look out into Infinity.

Milton is one of the 'great' things in English life and literature, and his admirers dwell on his great achievements. These achievements often leave me a little cold, intellectually acquiescent, nothing more. But when I hear of these olives which the blind old scholar-poet was wont to eat for supper I am at once brought nearer to him. I intuitively divine what they meant to him.

Olives are not the most obvious food for an English Puritan of the seventeenth century, though olive-oil is said to have been used here even in the fourteenth century. Milton might more naturally, one supposes, like his arch-Puritanic foe,

Prynne, have 'refocillated' his brain with ale and bread, and indeed he was still too English, and perhaps too wise, to disdain either.

But Milton had lived in Italy. There the most brilliant and happy days of his life had been spent. All the rest of his real and inner life was but an echo of the music he had heard in Italy. For Milton was only on one side of his nature the austere Latin secretary of Cromwell and the ferocious opponent of Salmasius. He was also the champion of the tardy English Renaissance, the grave and beautiful youth whose every fibre thrilled to the magic of Italy. For two rich months he had lived in Florence, then the most attractive of Italian cities, with Gaddi, Dati, Coltellini, and the rest for his friends. He had visited Galileo, then just grown blind, as he was himself destined to be. His inner sight always preserved the old visions he had garnered

At evening from the top of Fiesole,
Or in Valdarno.

Now at last, in the company of sour and ignorant Puritans who counted him one of themselves, while a new generation grew up which ignored him and which he disdained, in this sulphurous atmosphere of London which sickened and drove away his secretary Ellwood, Milton ate a handful of olives. And all Italy came to him in those olives.

'What! when the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea?' 'Oh no, no, no!' said Blake, 'I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host.' And these dull green exotic fruits which the blind Milton ate bedwards were the heralds of dreams diviner than he freighted with magnificent verse.

FEBRUARY 3: 'Every well-written novel,' I find Remy de Gourmont stating, 'seems immoral.' A paradox? By no means; Gourmont, the finest of living critics, is not a paradox-monger. He is referring to the prosecution of *Madame Bovary*, a book which Taine said might profitably be used in Sunday Schools; and he points out that Flaubert — and every other profoundly original writer — by avoiding the commonplace phrase, the familiar counter, by deliberately choosing each word, by moulding his language to a personal rhythm, imparts such novelty to his descriptions that the reader seems to himself to be assisting for the first time at a scene which is yet exactly the same as those described in all novels. Hence inevitable scandal.

One may very well add that in this matter Life follows the same law as Art. It is the common fate of all creative work (and 'non merita nome di Creatore se non Iddio ed il Poeta'). Whoso lives well, as whoso writes well, cannot fail to convey an alarming impression of novelty, precisely because he is in accurate personal adjustment to the facts of his own time. So he is counted immoral and criminal, as Nietzsche delighted to explain. Has not Nietzsche himself been counted, in his own playful phrase, an 'immoralist'? Yet the path of life that Nietzsche proposed to follow was just the same ancient, old-fashioned, in the true sense trivial path which all the world has trodden. Only his sensitive feet felt that path so keenly, with such a new grip of the toes on the asperities of it, that the mob cried: Why, this man cannot possibly be on our good old well-worn comfortable highway; he must have set off on some new path, no doubt a very bad and wicked path, where trespassers must be prosecuted. And it was just the same venerable path that all humanity has travelled, the path that Adam and Eve scuttled over, in hairy nakedness, through the jungle of the Garden of Eden!

That is one of the reasons — and there are many of them

— why the social ideal of Herbert Spencer, in which the adjustment of life is so perfect that friction is impossible, can never be attained. Putting aside the question of the desirability of such an ideal it is impossible to see how it could be achieved, either along the line of working at Heredity, or along the line of working at the Environment. Even the most keenly intellectual people that ever existed, the most amorous of novelty, the most supple-minded, could not permit Socrates to live, though all the time Socrates was going their own way, his feet pressing the same path; they still could not understand his prosaic way of looking intently where his feet fell. It must always happen so, and it always means conflict. Even a flower cannot burst into bloom without conflict, the balance of forces can never be quite equal and opposite, there must be a breaking down somewhere, there must always be conflict. We may regulate and harmonise the conditions, we cannot abolish the conflict. For Conflict is implicit in Life.

FEBRUARY 5: I note that Charles Dudley Warner (that splendid type of American man as I recall him in old age, pacing up and down my room, pondering out some serious problem of life), when half a century ago he came over to London for the first time on a visit from Paris, was struck by the contrast between the light luminosity of one city and the prevailing gloomy dirt of the other. The contrast may not be so pronounced to-day. Yet that same dirt — which has its beautiful side no doubt — remains the note of London, brown dirt all over the streets, black dirt all over the buildings, yellow dirt all over the sky, and those who live in it become subdued to what they live in, 'like the dyer's hand,' even literally.

So the sight of the Cornish coast, the prospect of seeing it,

the very thought of its existence, has the exhilaration of a rapturous prayer. There — sometimes, at all events — the earth is exquisitely clean, the bright sea bubbles like champagne, and its mere mists are rainbow-hued dreams; the sky has flung off its dingy robe and is naked, beautiful, alive. Profoundly alien to me as I always feel this land of Cornwall to be, it is much to feel there something of that elemental reality of which men count God the symbol. Here the city-stained soul may become the sacramental agent of a Divine Transubstantiation of the elements of earth, of air, of water, of fire.

FEBRUARY 8: It was a fine and deep saying of Aristotle's that 'the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor.' That is the mark of genius, for, said he, it implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars.

All the great thinkers have been masters of metaphor, because all vivid thinking must be in images, and the philosopher whose metaphors are blurred or diluted is one whose thinking is blurred and diluted. Thus it comes about that the thinkers who survive are the thinkers who wrote well and are most nearly poets. Not that they need have attained to that which we, individually or collectively, may be pleased to consider 'Truth.' But they were alive; they had realised what they meant; they embodied their thoughts in definite images which are a perpetual challenge to thought for all who come after. One may agree or disagree with Schopenhauer or with Nietzsche. But they were vitally and intensely alive; they transformed their thought into wonderful imagery; or they sang it and they danced it; and they are alive for ever. People talk of 'the passing of Kant.' It may be. But who will talk of the passing of Plato or even of the passing of Hobbes? No thinker has been so buffeted as Hobbes, and there is no school to accept his central thesis. It is no matter.

Hobbes flung aside all the armour of tradition and met the giant problem that faced him with his own sling and any stones out of the brook. It was enough to make him immortal. His achievement has receded into the past. The *Leviathan* is now an ancient tapestry which generations of street urchins have thrown mud at; and yet it remains radiantly beautiful.

All great thinkers are great masters of metaphor because all thinking of any kind must be by analogy. It may often be a misleading guide, but it remains the only guide. To say that thinking is by metaphor is merely the same thing as to say that the world is an infinite series of analogies enclosed one within another in a succession of Chinese boxes. Even the crowd recognises this. The story that Newton first saw the gravitation of the earth in the fall of an apple in the orchard, which Voltaire has transmitted to us from a fairly good source, has no first-hand authority. But the crowd has always accepted it as a gospel truth, and by a sound instinct. The Milky Way itself is pictured by its latest investigators as a vague spiral scarcely to be distinguished from the ascending smoke of a cigarette.

FEBRUARY 10: A French soprano, and it is the first time she has sung on an English platform. She walks on slowly and stands statuesquely motionless while the preliminary bars are being played. One notes her elegant Parisian costume, clinging and very low-cut, every detail of her appearance carefully thought out, constituting a harmony in itself, though not perhaps a harmony with this negligent Sunday afternoon environment in which the singer finds herself. Her voice is finely trained and under complete control, she enters into the spirit of the operatic scene she sings, dramatically, yet with restraint, with modulated movements, now of her arms, now of her whole supple body. In

her voice, as in her body, there is always a reserve of energy, a dignified self-respect; there is never any self-abandonment. She has sung first in French, now she comes on in an Italian air, and afterwards is not too coyly reticent in taking an encore which is in English, to a piano accompaniment, and when that is over, she hastens to bring the accompanist by the hand to her side before the audience, and bows, sweetly and graciously, with a gesture of the whole body, yet again with a certain reserve, not, as one may see some great singers, symbolically clasping her arms round the public and kissing it with humble gratitude. She is a complete success with her audience.

Yet she is really, one divines, a fairly commonplace person. And she is not beautiful. And even her voice has no marvellous original quality. She has on her side a certain quality of nervous texture to mould artistically, but that is not a personal possession but merely a quality of her race. She has laboriously wrought this ductile nervous tissue to her own ends. By force of long training, discipline, art, she has made herself what she desired to be. She has become all that she had in her to be. She has given to the world all that the world has any right to ask of her.

That is all. But this training and this discipline, the ability to be oneself and to impart graciously to others the utmost that they have any right to demand — is not that the whole Art of Living and the entire Code of Morality?

FEBRUARY 15: 'There is no Excellent Beauty that hath not some Strangeness in the Proportion.' That saying of Bacon's — one of the profoundest of human utterances — is significant not only for all life but for all art. In the sphere of literature, for instance, it makes impossible the use of counters.

The counter or the *cliché* — no doubt it is better known for what it is to good French writers — is the word or the phrase which has lost the original contour of its mintage and become a mere featureless coin, having still, as it were, its metallic meaning but no longer its fresh beauty and expressiveness. The young novelist whose hero 'wends his way,' and the journalist for whom a party of fifteen persons may be 'literally decimated,' are both adepts in the use of the counter. They use ancient worn words, such as leap first into the mind, words which are too effaced to be beautiful, and sometimes too effaced to be accurate. They are just counters for careless writers to pass on to careless readers, and not always reliable as counters.

We are all of us using these counters; they are convenient for the ordinary purposes of life, whenever the search for beauty and rarity and expressiveness may seem uncalled for. Even the master of style uses them unquestioned, so long as he uses them consciously, deliberately, of set purpose, with a sense of their just value for his purpose. When they are used, as sometimes happens, heedlessly and helplessly, by writers who are dealing with beautiful and expressive things, they become jarring vulgarisms which set the teeth on edge. Even a poet of real inspiration, like Francis Thompson, may seek to carry, 'hiddenly,' as he would express it, beneath the cloak of his rapture, all sorts of absurd archaisms, awkwardly conventional inversions, hideous neologisms like false antiques, all mere counters. A born writer with a personal instinct for expression, like Arthur Symonds, is not apt to resort to the use of counters, even when he is seemingly careless; a carefully trained artist in the use of words, like Stevenson, evidently rejects counters immediately; the man who is not a writer, born or made, sometimes uses nothing but counters.

A casual acquaintance once presented to me an epic he

had written in rhymed couplets, extending to many cantos. He was a man of bright and vigorous mind, but no poet. So when he set himself to write verse it is clear that he instinctively tested every word or phrase, and rejected those that failed to sound smooth, familiar, 'poetic,' to his reminiscent ear. The result is that the whole of his book is made up of counters, and every epithet is studiously obvious. The hero is 'dauntless,' and his 'steed' is 'noble,' and the sky at night is a 'spangled vault,' and 'spicy perfumes load the balmy air.' It is thirty years since that epic was placed in my hands, and I have often since had occasion to think that it might profitably be used by any teacher of English literature as a text for an ever-needed lesson on the counter. 'There is no Excellent Beauty that hath not some Strangeness in the Proportion.' Or, as Aristotle had said long before, there must be 'a certain admixture of unfamiliarity,' a continual slight novelty.

That is the Law of Beauty in Art because it is the Law of Morality in Life. Our acts so easily become defaced and conventionalised, mere uniform counters that have been used a thousand times before and rarely with any special applicability — often, indeed, a flagrant inapplicability — to the case in hand. The demand upon us in Life is to fling away counters, to react vitally to the vital circumstances of the situation. All the teachers of Excellent Beauty in the Moral Life bear witness to the truth of Bacon's saying. Look at the Sermon on the Mount: no doubt about the 'Strangeness in the Proportion' there! Socrates and Jesus, unlike as they were, so far as we are able to discern, were yet both marked by the same horror of counters. Sooner than employ them they would die. And indeed, if the Moral Life could be reduced to the simplicity of a slot-machine, it would still be necessary to put real pennies in.

FEBRUARY 23: Some time ago a navvy working in Sussex came upon a round object like a cocoa-nut which he flung carelessly out of the way. It would soon have disappeared for ever. But by an almost miraculous chance a man of science passed that way and secured the object, easily discernible as a portion of a human skull. Now that, with all that appertains to it, the fragment has been investigated, the Sussex navvy's unconscious find is revealed as perhaps the most precious and interesting thing that has ever been discovered in the earth, the earliest Charter in the History of Man.

Whenever I read of the chance discovery of fossils or human remains, of buried cities in Yucatan or Roman pavements beneath Gloucestershire meadows, or beautiful statues fished out of the Tiber, or mediæval treasures dug from below old castles, it grows an ever greater wonder to me that no one has yet proposed a systematic exploration of the whole earth beneath our feet. Here is this earth, a marvellous onion, a series of encapsuled worlds, each successive foliation preserving the intimate secrets of its own irrecoverable life. And Man the Baby, neglecting the wonderful Earth he crawls on, has cried for the barren Moon! All science has begun with the stars, and Early Man seemed to himself merely the by-play of a great cosmic process. God was first, and Man who had created Him — out of less than dust — was nowhere. Even in mediæval days we knew much more about Heaven and Hell than about Earth. The Earth comes last into man's view — even after Heaven and Hell and Purgatory — but it will surely be a puzzle for our successors that after a million years, even in our present little era, we had still not begun to scratch up systematically the soil we stand on and could scarcely so much as uncover Pompeii. For though the under-world is not all a buried Pompeii, it is a vast treasure-house. One cannot so much as put a spade into the garden-

mould of one's cottage-garden without now and then finding ancient coins and shards of strange pottery; and for all that you know, the clue to some mystery that has puzzled mankind for ages may at this moment lie a few inches below your feet.

It would be the task of an International Exfodiation Commission to dig up the whole earth systematically, leaving no inch of it untouched except on definitely determined grounds, the depth explored in each region being duly determined by experts. One might make a beginning with the banks of the Nile where the task is comparatively easy, and Nature has packed such fragile treasures in such antiseptic sand. Italy with its soil laden with marvellous things could be investigated at the same time, with all the shores of the Mediterranean. The work would take many centuries to complete and would cost vast sums of money. But when the nations are no longer engaged in the task of building warships which are obsolete a few weeks after they are launched, if not before, how vast a sum of money will be saved! The money which is wasted on the armies and navies of Europe alone during a single century would furnish a very respectable credit for the International Exfodiation Commission to begin work with. At the same time the men now employed in laboriously learning the trade of war, which they are seldom or never called upon to exercise, could be given something useful to do. In the meanwhile Exfodiation must wait until what an old English writer called 'the essential oil of democracy' is poured over the stormy waves of human society. You doubt whether that oil will calm the waves? But if your essential oil of democracy fails to possess that elementary property of oil it is hardly worth while to manufacture it.

Once achieved, whenever or however it is achieved, the task will be achieved for ever. It would be the greatest task man has ever attempted, and the most inspiring. He would

for the first time become fully conscious of himself. He would know all that he once was, and all that he has ever accomplished so far as its record survives. He would read clearly in the earth for the first time the title-deeds that make him the owner of the world. All that is involved is Exfodiation.

I call this process Exfodiation, because if our descendants happen to be at all like us they would much rather Exfodiate than Dig. As for us, we dare not so much as call our bodily organs and functions by their beautifully common names, and to Dig we are even more ashamed than to Beg.

MARCH 3: Some one was telling me yesterday how lately in Wales he stood in a wood by a little stream that ran swiftly over the stones, babbling and chattering — the poets have wisely said — as children babble and chatter. ‘It is certainly the stream,’ he said to himself; ‘no, it must be children; no, it is the stream.’ And then a band of careless children, whose voices had mingled with the brook’s voice, emerged from amidst the wood.

Children are more than murmuring streams, and women are more than fragrant flowers, and men are more than walking trees. But on one side they are all part of the vision and music of Nature, not merely the creators of pictures and melodies, but even yet more fundamentally themselves the music and the vision. We cannot too often remember that not only is the art of man an art that Nature makes, but that Man himself is Nature. Accordingly as we cherish that faith, and seek to live by it, we vindicate our right to the Earth, and preserve our sane and vital relations to the Earth’s life. The poets love to see human emotions in the procession of cosmic phenomena. But we have also to see the force of the sun and the dust of the earth in the dance of the blood through the veins of Man.

Civilisation and Morals may seem to hold us apart from Nature. Yet the world has, even literally, been set in our hearts. We are of the Stuff of the Universe. In comparison with that fact Morals and Civilisation sink into Nothingness.

MARCH 7: So fine a critic of art as Remy de Gourmont finds it difficult, to his own regret, to admire Shakespeare on the stage, at all events in France in French translations. This is not, he says, what in France is counted great dramatic art; there is no beginning and there is no real end, except such as may be due to the slaughter of the characters; throughout it is possible to interpolate scenes or to subtract scenes. He is referring more especially to *Macbeth*.

It cannot be denied that there is truth in this plaint. In France, from a French standpoint — or, for the matter of that, from a Greek standpoint — Shakespeare must always be a barbarian. It is the same feeling — though not indeed in so great a degree — that one experiences when one looks at the picturesque disorder and irregularity of English Gothic churches from the standpoint of the severely ordered majesty of Chartres, or even of Amiens, which yet has so much about it that recalls its neighbourhood to England. From the right standpoint, however, English Gothic architecture is full of charm, and even of art. In the same way I cannot at all admit that Shakespeare is unsuited for the stage. One has only to remember that it is the Romantic not the Classic stage. It is the function of the Shakesperian drama, and of the whole school of which Shakespeare is the supreme representative (I put aside Marlowe who died in the making of a greater classic tradition), to evoke a variegated vision of the tragi-comedy of life in its height and its depth, its freedom, and its wide horizon. This drama has for the most part little to do with the operation of the Fate which works itself

out when a man's soul is in the stern clutch of Necessity. We are far here from Euripides and from Ibsen. Life is always a pageant here, a tragi-comedy, which may lean sometimes more to comedy, and sometimes more to tragedy, but has in it always, even in *Lear*, an atmosphere of enlarging and exhilarating gaiety.

Shakespeare is for the stage. But what stage? We were cut off for ever from the Shakesperian tradition in the very generation after Shakespeare died, and have not acquired a sound new tradition even yet. The device of substituting drapery for scenery and relying exclusively on the gorgeous flow of words for decorative purposes fails to satisfy us, and we fall back on the foolish trick of submerging Shakespeare in upholstery and limelight.

It seems to me that we may discern the beginning of a more rational tradition in Granville Barker's staging of *Twelfth Night* at the Savoy. There is something here of the romantic suggestion and the easy freedom which are of the essence of the Shakesperian drama. The creamy walls, possibly an approximation to the courtyard-like theatre of the Elizabethans, are a perfect background for the play of brilliant figures; the light curtains furnish precisely the desired suggestion of scenery; and when at last all the figures wander up the stairway in the background as the Fool sings his inconsequent song, 'With hey ho the wind and the rain,' the whole gracious dream melts away deliciously, as it seemed to Prospero, and surely to Shakespeare himself, the dream of life in the end melts away in the wind or the rain of the grave.

Thus conceived, the Shakesperian drama has surely as good a right to exist on the stage as the drama of Molière. There cannot be the same perfection of finish and detail, for this is only an experiment, and there is inevitably a total difference of method. Yet, as thus presented, *Twelfth Night* lingers in my mind with *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* as presented at the

Comedie Française, so presented that, by force of tradition wrought with faultless art, a play becomes an embodied symphony, a visible manifestation of gracious music.

MARCH 13: I passed in the village street the exotic figure of a fat man in a flat cap and a dark blue costume, with very wide baggy trousers down to the ground. He was reading a newspaper as he walked with an easy slouch. His fat shaven face was large and round and wrinkled, yet not flabby. Altogether there was something irresistibly Chinese about him. Strange that this curious figure should be the typical English sailor, the legendary Hero of the British People, and the person on whose existence that of the English nation is held to depend.

MARCH 16: Two feminine idealists. I read of an English suffragette trying to address a meeting and pelted with tomatoes by a crowd grown weary of suffragette outrages. And shortly after I read of a young German dancer in a small Paris theatre who in the course of her dance is for a few moments absolutely naked, whereupon the Chief of Police sends for her and draws up a charge of 'outrage aux mœurs.' To a journalist she expresses her indignation at this insult to her art: 'Let there be no mistake; when I remove my chemise to come on the stage it is in order to bare my soul.' Not quite a wise thing to say to a journalist, but it is in effect what the suffragette also says, and is rewarded with rotten tomatoes as her sister with a *procès-verbal*.

One sees the whole-hearted enthusiasm of both the suffragette and the dancer. Unwise, no doubt, unable to discern the perspective of life, or to measure the inevitable social reactions of their time. Yet idealists, even martyrs, for Art or

for Justice, exposed in the arena of the world, as the Perpetuas and Blandinas of old were exposed out of love for Jesus, all moved by the Spirit of Life, though, as the ages pass, the Excuses of Life differ. Many Masks, but one Face and one Arena.

For the Mob, huddled like sheep around this Arena of Life, and with no vital instinct to play therein any part of their own, it is not for these to cast contumely. Let them be well content that for a brief moment it is theirs to gaze at the Spectacle of Divine Gaiety and then be thrust into outer Darkness.

MARCH 17: Yet, when one thinks of it, why should the mob in the galleries not hiss, when they so please, the spectacle they were not made to take part in? They are what they are born to be and what circumstances have made them, the legitimate outcome of your Random Procreation, and your Compulsory Education, your Regulations and By-laws, spread thick over every inch of Land and Sea and Air. And if they still throw rotten tomatoes and draw up charge sheets in police stations, why should they not enjoy their brief moment of Living Action, and be Damned?

We may even go a step further. It has to be remembered that the Actors of Life, interesting as they are, exist for the audience, and not the audience for the Actors. The Actors are the abnormal and exceptional people, born out of due time, at variance with the environment; that is why they are Actors. This vast inert mass of people, with no definite individualities of their own, they are normal and healthy Humanity, born to consume the Earth's fruits, even when these fruits happen to be dancers and suffragettes. It is thus that harmony is established between Actors and Spectators;

neither could exist without the other. Both are needed in any Cosmic Arena.

MARCH 18: I always recall with a certain surprise how many years ago a fine critic who is also a fine writer told me he had no admiration for Addison, and even seemed to feel a certain disdain. This attitude caused me no resentment, for Addison makes no personal appeal to me, and I experience no great interest in the things he writes about. I am content to read a page of him in bed, and there-with peacefully fall asleep.

Yet surely Addison, and still more Steele, the authors of the *Spectator* and the *Tatler*, represent the high-water mark of English Speech. The mere rubbish left by the tide, if you like, for I am not asserting that the position of Addison and of Steele is necessarily the sole result of individual desert. They mark a special moment in the vital growth of language, if only by revealing the Charm of Triviality, and they stood among a crowd — Defoe, Temple, Swift, and the rest — who at various points surpassed them. A magnificent growth had preceded them. The superb and glowing weight of Bacon had become the tumultuous splendour of Milton, which subsided into the unconscious purity of Bunyan, the delicate simplicity of Cowley, and the muscular orderliness of Dryden. Every necessary quality of prose had been separately conquered. An instrument had been created that contained all the stops, and might be used not only for the deepest things of life, but equally for the lightest. And then, suddenly, the whole English world began to use words beautifully, and not only so, but to spell, to punctuate, to use their capital letters with corresponding beauty. So it was at the end of the seventeenth century and during the first quarter of the eighteenth. Addison and Steele stand for that epoch.

Then the tide began to ebb. That fine equilibrium of all the elements of speech could not be maintained indefinitely. Its poise and equability began to grow trivial, its exalted familiarity to become mere vulgarity. So violent reactions became necessary. Johnson and Johnsonese swept heavily over the retreating tide and killed what natural grace and vivacity might have been left in Goldsmith or in Graves. But even had there been no Johnson the reaction was inevitable. Every great writer began to be an isolated grandee who lost the art of familiarity, for he had no one to be familiar with. Consider Gibbon, in his own domain supreme, but the magnificent fall of his cadences, however fit for his subject, was fit for no other; and look at Landor, the last great writer of English, though even he never quite scoured off the lingering dross of Johnsonese, and at the best has the air of a giant conversing with pigmies.

Then we come to the nineteenth century, where we find writing that is bad, indifferent, good, rarely perfect save now and again for a brief moment, as in Lamb, who incarnated again the old familiar touch on great things and little things alike, and into that was only driven, likely enough, by the scourge of madness. Then there was Pater, who was exquisite, even a magician, yet scarcely great. And there was Stevenson — prototype of a vast band of accomplished writers of today — the hollow image of a great writer, a man who, having laboriously taught himself to write after the best copybook models, found that he had nothing to say and duly said it at length. It was a state of things highly pleasing to the mob. For they said one to another: Look, here is a man who writes beautifully, evidently a Great Writer; and there is nothing inside him but sawdust, just like you and me. For the most part good writing in the nineteenth century was self-conscious writing, which cannot be beautiful. Is a woman gazing into her mirror beautiful?

Our writers waver between vulgarity on the one hand, artificiality or eccentricity on the other. It is an alternation of evils. The best writing must always possess both Dignity and Familiarity, otherwise it can never touch at once the high things and the low things of life, or appeal simply to the complete human person. That is well illustrated by Cervantes, who thereby becomes, for all his carelessness, one of the supremely great writers. There, again, is Brantôme, not a supremely great writer, or even a writer who set out to be great. But he has in him the roots of great style. He possesses in an incomparable degree this High Familiarity. His voice is so exquisitely pitched that he can describe with equal simplicity and charm the secrets of monarchs' hearts or the intimate peculiarities of maids of honour. He knows that, as a fine critic has said, everything is serious and at the same time frivolous. He makes us feel that the ambitions of monarchs may be frivolous, and the intimate secrets of maids of honor of serious interest.

But where is our great writer to-day, and how can we apply this test to him? If he deals frivolously with the King off he goes to prison, and if he deals seriously with so much as a chambermaid's physical secrets off he goes to prison again, only on a different pretext. And in either case we all cry: Serve him right!

It ought to be a satisfaction to us to feel that we could not well sink lower. There is nothing left for us but to rise. The tide turns at low water as well as at high.

MARCH 19: 'Behold a Republic,' once eloquently exclaimed Mr. Bryan, now Secretary of State of the United States, 'solving the problem of civilisation, hastening the coming of Universal Brotherhood, a Republic which gives light and inspiration to those who sit in darkness

... a Republic gradually but surely becoming the supreme moral factor in the world's progress!'

Behold a Republic, one is hereby at once impelled to continue, where suspected evildoers are soaked in oil and roasted, where the rulings of judges override the law, a Republic where the shadow of morality is preferred to the substance, and a great man is driven out of the land because he has failed to conform to that order of things, a Republic where those who sit in darkness are permitted to finance crime. It would not be difficult to continue Mr. Bryan's rhapsody in the same vein.

Now one has no wish to allude to these things. Moreover, it is easy to set forth definitely splendid achievements on the other side of the account, restoring the statement to balance and sanity. It is the glare of rhapsodical eulogy which instinctively and automatically evokes the complementary colours and after-images. For, as Keble rightly thought, it is a dangerous exploit to

wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.

The spectacle of his hinder parts thus presented to the world may be quite other than the winder intended.

MARCH 20: The other day a cat climbed the switch-board at the electric lighting works of Cardiff, became entangled in the wires, and plunged the city into darkness, giving up his life in this supreme achievement. It is not known that he was either a Syndicalist or a Suffragette. But his adventure is significant for the Civilisation we are moving towards.

All Civilisation depends on the Intelligence, Sympathy, and Mutual Trust of the persons who wrought that Civilisation. It was not so in barbaric days to anything like the same

degree. Then a man's house was his castle. He could shut himself up with his family and his retainers and be independent of society, even laugh at its impotent rage. No man's house is his castle now. He is at the mercy of every imbecile and every fanatic. His whole life is regulated by delicate mechanisms which can be put out of gear by a touch. There is nothing so fragile as civilisation, and no high civilisation has long withstood the manifold risks it is exposed to. Nowadays any naughty grown-up child can say to Society: Give me the sugar-stick I want or I'll make your life intolerable. And for a brief moment he makes it intolerable.

Nature herself in her most exquisite moods has shared the same fate at the hands of Civilised Man. If there is anything anywhere in the world that is rare and wild and wonderful, singular in the perfection of its beauty, Civilised Man sweeps it out of existence. It is the fate everywhere of lyre-birds, of humming-birds, of birds of Paradise, marvellous things that Man may destroy and can never create. They make poor parlour ornaments and but ugly adornments for silly women. The world is the poorer and we none the richer. The same fate is overtaking all the loveliest spots on the earth. There are rare places which Primitive Man only approaches on special occasions, with sacred awe, counting their beauty inviolable and the animals living in them as gods. Such places have existed in the heart of Africa unto to-day. Civilised man arrives, disperses the awe, shoots the animals, if possible turns them into cash. Eventually he turns the scenery into cash, covering it with dear hotels and cheap advertisements. In Europe the process has long been systematised. Lake Lemman was once a spot which inspired poets with a new feeling for romantic landscape. What Rousseau or Byron could find inspiration on that lake to-day? The Pacific once hid in its wilderness a multitude of little islands upon which, as the first voyagers and missionaries bore witness, Primitive

Man, protected by Nature from the larger world, had developed a rarely beautiful culture, wild and fierce and voluptuous, and yet in the highest degree humane. Civilised man arrived, armed with Alcohol and Syphilis and Trousers and the Bible, and in a few years only a sordid and ridiculous shadow was left of that uniquely wonderful life. People talk with horror of 'Sabotage.' Naturally enough. Yet they do not see that they themselves are morally supporting, and financially paying for, and even religiously praying for, a gigantic system of world-wide 'Sabotage' which for centuries has been recklessly destroying things that are infinitely more lovely and irreparable than any that Syndicalists may have injured.

Nature has her revenge on Civilised Man, and when he in his turn comes to produce exquisite things she in her turn crushes them. By chance, or with a fine irony, she uses as her instruments the very beings whom he, in his reckless fury of incompetent breeding, has himself procreated. And whether he will ever circumvent her by learning to breed better is a question which no one is yet born to answer.

MARCH 21: It is maintained by some that every great poet is a great critic. I fail to see it. For the most part I suspect the poetry of the great critic and the criticism of the great poet. There can be no more instructive series of documents in this matter than the enthusiastic records of admiration which P. H. Bailey collected from the first poets of his time concerning his *Festus*. That work was no doubt a fine achievement; when I was fifteen I read it from end to end with real sympathy, and interest that was at least tepid. But to imagine that it was a great poem, or that there was so much as a single line of great poetry in all the six hundred pages of it! It needed a poet for that.

If we consider poets as critics in the field of art generally, where their æsthetic judgment might be less biassed, they show no better. Think of the lovely little poem in which Tennyson eulogised the incongruous façade of Milan Cathedral. And for any one who with Wordsworth's exquisite sonnet on King's College Chapel in his mind has the misfortune to enter that long tunnel, beplastered with false ornament, the disillusion is unforgettable. Robert Browning presents a highly instructive example of the poet as critic. He was interested in many artists in many fields of art, yet it seems impossible for him to be interested in any who were not second-rate or altogether inferior: Abt Vogler, Galuppi, Guercino, Andrea del Sarto, and the rest. One might hesitate indeed to call Filippo Lippi inferior, but the Evil Genius still stands by, and from Browning's hands Lippi escapes a very poor creature.

Baudelaire stands apart as a great poet who was an equally great critic, as intuitive, as daring, as decisively and immediately right in æsthetic judgment as an artistic creation. And even with Baudelaire as one's guide one sometimes needs to walk by faith. In the Baroque church of Saint Loup in Namur he admired so greatly — the church wherein he was in the end stricken by paralysis — I have wandered and hesitated a little between the great critic's insight into a strange beauty and the great artist's acceptance of so frigidly artificial a model.

Why, indeed, should one expect a great poet to be a great critic? The fine critic must be sensitive, but he must also be clear-eyed, calm, judicial. The poet must be swept by emotion, carried out of himself, strung to high tension. How can he be sure to hold the critical balance even? He must indeed be a critic, and an exquisite critic, in the embodiment of his own dream, the technique of his own verse. But do not expect him to be a critic outside his own work. Do not expect

to find the bee an authority on anthills or the ant a critic of honeycomb.

MARCH 22: Hendrik Andersen sends me from Rome the latest news of that proposed World City he is working towards with so much sanguine ardour, the City which is to be the internationally social Embodiment of the World Conscience, though its site — Tervueren, Berne, the Hague, Paris, Fréjus, San Stefano, Rome, Lakewood — still remains undetermined. So far the City is a fairy tale, but in that shape it has secured influential support and been worked out in detail by some forty architects, engineers, sculptors, and painters, under the direction of Hébrard. It covers some ten square miles of ground. In its simple dignity, in its magnificent design, in its unrivalled sanitation, it is unique. The International Centres represented fall into three groups: Physical Culture, Science, Art. The Art centres are closely connected with the Physical Culture Centres by gardens devoted to floriculture, natural history, zoölogy, and botany. It is all very well.

So far I know of only one World City. But Rome was the creation of a special and powerful race, endowed with great qualities, and with the defects of those qualities, and, moreover, it was the World City of a small world. Who are to be the creators of this new World City? If it is not to be left in the hands of a few long-haired men and short-haired women, it will need a solid basis of ordinary people, including no doubt English, such as Mr. A., and Mrs. B., and Miss C.

Now I know Mr. A., and Mrs. B., and Miss C., their admirable virtues, their prim conventions, their little private weaknesses, their ingrained prejudices, their mutual suspicion of one another. Little people may fittingly rule a little village. But these little people would dominate the huge Natatorium,

the wonderful Bureau of Anthropological Records, and the Temple of Religions.

On the whole I would rather work towards the creation of Great People than of World Centres. Before creating a World Conscience let us have bodies and souls for its reception. I am not enthusiastic about a World Conscience which will be enshrined in Mr. A., and Mrs. B., and Miss C. Excellent people, I know, but — a World Conscience?

EASTER SUNDAY: What a strange fate it is that made England! A little ledge of beautiful land in the ocean, to draw and to keep all the men in Europe who had the sea in their hearts and the wind in their brains, daring children of Nature, greedy enough and romantic enough to trust their fortunes to waves and to gales. The most eccentric of peoples, all the world says, and the most acquisitive, made to be pirates and made to be poets, a people that have fastened their big teeth into every quarter of the globe and flung their big hearts in song at the feet of Nature, and even done both things at the same time. The man who wrote the most magnificent sentence in the English language was a pirate and died on the scaffold.

MARCH 26: I have lately been hearing Busoni play Chopin, and absorbing an immense joy from the skill with which that master-player evokes all the virile and complex power of Chopin, the power and the intellect which Pachmann, however deliciously he catches the butterflies fluttering up from the keys, for the most part misses.

All the great artists, in whatever medium, take so rare a delight, now and again, in interpreting some unutterable

emotion, some ineffable vision, in mere terms of technique. In Chopin, in Rodin, in Besnard, in Rossetti — indeed in any supreme artist — again and again I have noted this. Great simple souls for the most part, inarticulate except through an endless power over the medium of their own art, they all love to take some insignificant little lump of that medium, to work at that little lump, with all their subtlest skill and power, in the production of what seemingly may be some absolutely trivial object or detail, and yet, not by what it obviously represents, but by the technique put into it, has become a reality, a secret of the soul, and an embodiment of a vision never before seen on earth.

Many years ago I realised this over Rossetti's poem 'Cloud Confines.' It is made out of a little lump of tawdry material which says nothing, is, indeed, mere twaddle. Yet it is wrought with so marvellous a technique that we seem to catch in it a far-away echo of voices that were heard when the morning stars sang together, and it clings tremulously to the memory for ever.

Technique is the art of so dealing with matter — whether clay or pigment or sounds or words — that it ceases to affect us in the same way as the stuff it is wrought out of originally affects us, and becomes a Transparent Symbol of a Spiritual Reality. Something that was always familiar and commonplace is suddenly transformed into something that until that moment eye had never seen or ear heard, and that yet seems the revelation of our hearts' secret.

It is an important point to remember. For one sometimes hears ignorant persons speak of technique with a certain supercilious contempt, as though it were a mere negligible and inferior element in an artist's equipment and not the art itself, the mere virtuosity of an accomplished fiddler who seems to say anything with his fiddle, and has never really said anything in his whole life. To the artist technique is

another matter. It is the little secret by which he reveals his soul, by which he reveals the soul of the world. Through technique the stuff of the artist's work becomes the stuff of his own soul moulded into shapes that were never before known. In that act Dust is transubstantiated into God. The Garment of the Infinite is lifted, and the aching human heart is pressed for one brief moment against the breast of the Ineffable Mystery.

MARCH 29: I notice that in his *Year's Journey through France and Spain in 1795*, Thicknesse favourably contrasts the Frenchman, who only took wine at meals, with the Englishman, who, 'earning disease and misery at his bottle, sits at it many hours after dinner and always after supper.' The French have largely retained their ancient sober habit (save for the unhappy introduction of the afternoon *apéritif*), but the English have shown a tendency to abandon their intemperance of excess in favour of an opposed intemperance, and instead of drinking till they fall under the table have sometimes developed a passion for not drinking at all. Similarly in eating, the English of old were renowned for the enormous quantities of roast beef they ate; the French, who have been famous breadmakers for at least seven hundred years, ate much bread and only a moderate amount of meat; that remains their practice to-day, and though such skilful cooks of vegetables the French have never shown any tendency to live on them. When I was last at Versailles the latest guidebook mentioned a vegetarian restaurant; I sought it out, only to find that it had already disappeared. But the English have developed a passion for vegetarianism, here again reacting from one intemperance to the opposed intemperance. Just in the same way we have a national passion for bull-baiting and cock-fighting and pheasant-shooting and fox-hunting,

and a no less violent passion for anti-vivisection and the protection of animals.

This characteristic really goes very deep into our English temper. The Englishman is termed eccentric, and eccentricity in a precise and literal sense, is fundamental in the English character. We preserve our balance, in other words, by passing from one extreme to the opposite extreme, and keep in touch with our centre of gravity by rolling heavily from one side of it to the other side.

Geoffrey Malaterra, who outlined the Norman character many centuries ago with much psychological acuteness, insisted on the excessiveness of that *gens effrenatissima*, the tendency to unite opposite impulses, the taste for contradictory extremes. Now of all their conquests the Normans only made one true and permanent Conquest, the Conquest of England. And as Freeman has pointed out, surely with true insight, the reason of the profound conquest of England by the Normans simply lay in the fact that the spirit of the Norman was already implanted in the English soil, scattered broadcast by a long series of extravagant Northmen who had daringly driven their prows into every attractive inlet. So on the spiritual side the Northmen had really in England little conquest to make. The genius of Canute, one of the greatest of English kings and a Northman, had paved the road for William the Conqueror. It was open to William Blake, surely an indubitable Englishman, to establish the English national motto: 'The Road of Excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom.' Certainly it is a motto that can only be borne triumphantly on the standard of a very well-tempered nation. On that road it is so easy to miss Wisdom and only encounter Dissolution. Doubtless, on the whole, the Greeks knew better.

Now see how Illusion enters into the world, and men are moved by what Jules de Gaultier calls Bovarism, the desire to be other than they are. Here is this profound, blind, un-

conscious impulse, lying at the heart of the race for thousands of years, and not to be torn out. And the children of the race, when the hidden impulse stirring within drives them to extremes, invent beautiful reasons for those extremes: patriotic reasons, biological reasons, æsthetic reasons, moral reasons, humanitarian reasons, hygienic reasons — there is no end to them.

APRIL 1: When the boisterous winds of March are at last touched with a new softness and become strangely exhilarating, when one sees the dry hedges everywhere springing into points of delicate green and white blossoms shining in the bare trees, then, for those who live in England and know that summer is still far away, the impulse of migration arises within. It has always seemed remarkable to me that Chaucer, at the outset of the *Canterbury Tales*, definitely and clearly assumes that the reason for pilgrimage is not primarily religious but biological, an impulse due to the first manifestation of spring:

Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmers for to seken straunge strondes.

And what a delightful fiction (a manifestation of Vaihinger's omnipotent 'als ob') to transform this inner impulse into a sacred objective duty!

Perhaps if we were duly sensitive to the Inner Voice responding to natural conditions, we might detect a migratory impulse for every month in the year. For every month there is surely some fitting land and sky, some fragrance that satisfies the sense or some vision that satisfies the soul.

In January certainly — if I confined my migrations to Europe — I would be in the gardens of Malaga, for at that season it is that we of the North most crave to lunch beneath the orange trees and to feel the delicious echo of the sun in the

air of midnight. In February I would go to Barcelona, where the cooler air may be delightful, though when is it not delightful in Barcelona, even if martial law prevails? For March there is doubtless Sicily. For April there is no spot like Seville, when Spring arrives in a dazzling intoxicating flash. In May one should be in Paris to meet the spring again, softly insinuating itself into the heart under the delicious northern sky. In June and July we may be anywhere, in cities or in forests. August I prefer to spend in London, for then only is London leisurely, brilliant, almost exotic; and only then can one really see London. During September I would be wandering over Suffolk, to inhale its air and to revel in its villages, or else anywhere in Normandy where the crowd are not. I have never known where I would be in October, to escape the first deathly chill of winter; but at all events there is Aix-les-Bains, beautifully cloistered within its hills and still enlivened by fantastic visions from the whole European world. In November there is the Cornish coast, then often most exquisite, with soft nights, magical skies, and bays star-illuminated with fishers' lights, fireflies of the sea. And before November is over I would be in Rome to end the year, not Rome the new-fangled capital of an upstart kingdom, but that Rome, if we may still detect it, which is the greatest and most inspiring city in the world.

APRIL 4: An advocate of Anti-vivisection brings an action for libel against an advocate of Vivisection. It matters little which will win. (The action was brought on All Fool's Day.) The interesting point is that each represents a great — or, if you prefer, a little — truth. But if each recognized the other's truth he would be paralysed in proclaiming his own truth. There would be general stagnation. The world is carried on by ensuring that those

who carry it on shall be blinded in one or the other eye. We may call it the method of one-sided blinkers.

It is an excellent device of the Ironist.

APRIL 8: As very slowly, by rare sudden glimpses, one obtains an insight into the lives of people, one is constantly impressed by the large amount of their moral activity which is hidden from view. No doubt there are people who are all of a piece and all on the surface, people who are all that they seem and nothing beyond what they seem. Yet I am sometimes tempted to think that most people circle round the world as the moon circles round it, always carefully displaying one side only to the human spectators' view, and concealing unknown secrets on their hidden hemispheres.

The side that is displayed is, in the moral sphere, generally called 'respectable,' and the side that is hidden 'vicious.' What men show they call their 'virtues.' But if one looks at the matter broadly and naturally, may it not be that the vices themselves are after all nothing but disreputable virtues? It is not only schoolboys and servant-girls who spend a considerable part of their time in doing things which are flagrantly and absurdly contradictory of that artificially modelled propriety which in public they exhibit. It is just the same, one finds by chance revelations, among merchant princes and leaders of learned professions. For it is not merely the degenerate and the unfit who cannot confine all their activities within the limits prescribed by the conventional morality which surrounds them, but often the ablest and most energetic men, the sweetest and gentlest women. Moreover, it would often seem that on this unseen side of their lives they may be even more heroic, more inspired, more ideal, more vitally stimulated, than they are on that side with which they confront the world.

Suppose people were morally inverted, turned upside down, with their vices above water, and their respectable virtues submerged, suppose that they were, so to say, turned morally inside out. And suppose that vice became respectable and the respectabilities vicious, that men and women exercised their vices openly and indulged their virtues in secret, would the world be any the worse? Would there be a difference in the real nature of people if they changed the fashion of wearing the natural hairy fur of their coats inside instead of outside?

And if there is a difference, what is that difference?

APRIL 10: I am a little surprised sometimes to find how commonly people suppose that when one is unable to accept their opinions one is therefore necessarily hostile to them. Thus a few years ago, I recall, Professor Freud wrote how much pleasure it would give him if he could overcome my hostility to his doctrines. But, as I hastened to reply, I have no hostility to his doctrines, though they may not at every point be acceptable to my own mental constitution. If I see a man pursuing a dangerous mountain tract I am not hostile in being unable to follow far on the same track. On the contrary, I may call attention to that pioneer's adventure, may admire his courage and skill, even applaud the results of his efforts, or at all events the great ideal that animated him. In all this I am not with him, but I am not hostile.

Why, indeed, should one ever be hostile? What a vain thing is this hostility! A dagger that pierces the hand of him that holds it. They who take up the sword shall perish by the sword was the lesson Jesus taught and himself never learnt it. Ferociously, recklessly, that supreme master of denunciation took up the sword of his piercing speech against the 'Scribes'

and the 'Pharisees' of the 'generation of vipers,' until he made their very names a by-word and a reproach. And yet the Church of Jesus has been the greatest generator of Scribes and Pharisees the world has ever known, and they have even proved the very bulwark of it to this day. Look, again, at Luther. There was the Catholic Church dying by inches, gently, even exquisitely. And here came that gigantic peasant, with his too exuberant energy, battered the dying Church into acute sensibility, kicked it into emotion, galvanised it into life, prolonged its existence for a thousand years. The man who sought to exterminate the Church proved to be the greatest benefactor the Church had ever known.

The end men attain is rarely the end they desired. Some go out like Saul, the son of Kish, who sought his father's asses and found a kingdom, and some sally forth to seek kingdoms and find merely asses. In the one case and in the other they are led by a hand that they knew not to a goal that was not so much their own as that of their enemies.

So it is that we live for ever on hostility. Our friends may be the undoing of us; in the end it is our enemies who save us. The views we hate become ridiculous because they adopt them. Their very thoroughness leads to an overwhelming reaction on whose waves we ride to victory. Even their skill calls out our greater skill and our finer achievement. At their best, at their worst, alike they help us. They are the very life-blood in our veins.

It is a strange world in which, as Paulhan says (and I chance to alight on his concordant words even as I write this note), 'things are not employed according to their essence, but, as a rule, for ends which are directly opposed to that essence.' We are more unsuccessful than we know. And if we could all realise more keenly that we are fighting not so much in our own cause as in the cause of our enemies, how greatly it would make for the Visible Harmony of the World.

APRIL 12: All literary art lies in the arrangement of life. The literature most adequate to the needs of life is that most capable of transforming the facts of life into expressive and beautiful words. French literary art has always had that power. English literary art had it once and has lost it now. When I read, for instance, Goncourt's *Journal* — one of the few permanently interesting memoirs the nineteenth century has left us — my heart sinks at the comparison of its adequacy to life with the inadequacy of all contemporary English literature which seeks to grapple with life.

It is all pathetically mirrored in the typical English comic paper, *Punch*, this inability to go below the surface of life, or even to touch life at all, save in narrowly prescribed regions. But Goncourt is always able to say what there is to say, simply and vividly; whatever aspect of life presents itself, of that he is able to speak. I can understand, surprising as at first it may be, how Verlaine, who seems at every point so remote from Goncourt, yet counted him as the first prose-writer of his time; Verlaine had penetrated to the *simplicité cachée* (to use Poincaré's phrase) behind the seemingly tortured expressions of Goncourt's art. Goncourt makes us feel that whatever is fit to occur in the world is fit to be spoken of by him who knows how to speak of it. If we wish to face the manifold interest of the world, in its poignancy and its beauty, as well as in its triviality, there is no other way.

English literary art was strong and brave and expressive for several centuries, even, one may say, on the whole, up to the end of the eighteenth century, though I suppose that Dr. Johnson had helped to crush the life out of it. When Queen Victoria came to the throne the finishing stroke seems to have been dealt at it. One might fancy that the whole literary world had become conscious of the youthful and innocent monarch's eye on every book issued from the press, and

that every writer feared he might write a word to bring a blush on her virginal countenance. When young Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, they seem to have felt, it was another matter. There was a monarch who feared nothing and nobody, who once spat at a courtier whose costume disliked her, who as a girl had experienced no resentment when the Lord High Admiral, who was courting her, sent a messenger to 'ax hir whether hir great buttocks were grown any less or no,' a monarch who was not afraid of any word in the English language, and loved the most expressive words best. Under such a monarch, the Victorian writers felt they would no longer have modestly refrained from becoming Shakespeares.

But the excuses for feebleness are apt to be more ingenious than convincing. There is no connection between coarseness and art. Goncourt was a refined aristocrat who associated with the most highly civilised men and women of his day, and possessed the rarest secrets of æsthetic beauty. Indeed, we may say that it is precisely the consciousness of coarseness which leads to a cowardly flight from the brave expression of life.

Most of these excuses are impotent. Most impotent of all is the excuse that their books reach the Nursery and the Young Ladies' School. Do they suppose by any chance that their books grapple with the real life of Nurseries and Young Ladies' Schools? If they grapple with that, they might grapple with anything. It is a subterfuge, a sham, and with fatty degeneration eating away the muscular fibre of their hearts, they snatch at it.

The road is long, and a high discipline is needed, and a great courage, if our English literature is to regain its old power and exert once more its proper influence in the world.

APRIL 16: I have often noticed — and I find that others also have noticed — that when an artist in design, whether line or colour or clay, takes up a pen and writes, he generally writes well, sometimes even superbly well. Again and again it has happened that a man who has spent his life with a brush in his hand has beaten the best penmen at their own weapon.

Leonardo, who was indeed great in everything, is among the few great writers of Italian prose. Blake was first and above all an artist in design, but at the best he had so magnificent a mastery of words that besides it all but the rare best of his work in design looks thin and artificial. Rossetti was drawing and painting all his life, and yet, as has now become clear, it is only in language, verse and prose alike, that he is a supreme master. Fromentin was a painter for his contemporaries, yet his paintings are now quite uninteresting, while the few books he wrote belong to great literature, to linger over with perpetual delight. Poetry seemed to play but a small part in the life of Michelangelo, yet his sonnets stand to-day by the side of his drawings and his marbles. Rodin has all his life been passionately immersed in plastic art; he has never written and seldom talks; yet whenever his more intimate disciples, a Judith Cladel or a Paul Gsell, have set down the things he utters, they are found to be among the most vital, fascinating, and profound sayings in the world.

Even a bad artist with the brush may be on the road to become a good artist with the pen. Euripides was not only a soldier, he had tried to be a painter before he became a supreme tragic dramatist, and, to come down to modern times, Hazlitt and Thackeray, both fine artists with the pen, had first been poor artists with the brush. It is hard, indeed, to think of any artist in design who has been a bad writer. The painter may never write, he may never feel an impulse

to write, but when he writes, it would almost seem without an effort, he writes well. The list of good artists and bad artists who have been masters of words, from Vasari and earlier onwards, is long. One sets down at random the names of Reynolds, Northcote, Delacroix, Woolner, Carrière, Leighton, Gauguin, Beardsley, Du Maurier, Besnard, to which doubtless it might be easy to add a host of others. And then, for contrast, think of that other art, which yet seems to be so much nearer to words; think of musicians!

The clue seems to be, not only in the nature of the arts of design, but also in the nature of writing. For, unlike all the arts, writing is not necessarily an art at all. It is just anything. It fails to carry inevitably within it the discipline of art. And if the writer is not an artist, if the discipline of art has left no acquired skill in his muscles and no instinctive habit in his nerves, he may never so much as discover that he is not an artist. The facility of writing is its fate.

Gourmont has well said that whatever is deeply thought is well written. And one might add that whatever is deeply observed is well said. The artist in design is by the very nature of his work compelled to observe deeply, precisely, beautifully. He is never able to revolve in a vacuum, or flounder in a morass, or run after a mirage. When there is nothing there he is still. He is held by his art to Nature. So, when he takes up his pen, by training, by acquired instinct, he still follows with the new instrument, deeply, precisely, beautifully, the same mystery of Nature.

It was by a somewhat similar transference of skilled experience that the great writers of Spain, who in so many cases were first soldiers and men of the sword, when they took up the pen, wrote, carelessly it may seem, but so poignantly, so vividly, so fundamentally well.

APRIL 22: There is a certain type of mind which constitutionally ignores and overlooks little things, and habitually moves among large generalisations. Of such minds we may well find a type in Bacon, who so often gave James I occasion to remark jocularly in the Council Chamber of his Lord Chancellor, *De minimis non curat lex*.

There is another type of mind which is constitutionally sensitive to the infinite significance of minimal things. Of such, very typical in our day are Freud and the Freudians grouped around him. There is nothing so small that for Freud it is not packed with endless meaning. Every slightest twitch of the muscles, every fleeting fancy of the brain, is unconsciously designed to reveal the deepest impulse of the soul. Every detail of the wildest dream of the night is merely a hieroglyph which may be interpreted. Every symptom of disease is a symbol of the heart's desire. In every seeming meaningless lapse of his tongue or his memory a man is unconsciously revealing his most guarded and shameful secret. It is the daring and fantastic attempt, astonishing in the unexpected amount of its success, to work out this Philosophy of the Unconscious which makes the work of the Freudians so fascinating.

They have their defects, both these methods, the far-sighted and the near-sighted. Bacon fell into the ditch, and Freud is obsessed by the vision of a world only seen through the delicate anastomosis of the nerves of sex. Yet also they both have their rightness, they both help us to realise the Divine Mystery of the Soul, towards which no telescope can carry us too far, and no microscope too near.

APRIL 23: I see to-day that Justice Darling — perhaps going a little out of his way — informed the jury in the course of a summing-up that he 'could not

read a chapter of Rabelais without being bored to death.' The assumption in this *obiter dictum* seemed to be that Rabelais is an obscene writer. And the implication seemed to be that to a healthily virtuous and superior mind like the Judge's the obscene is merely wearisome.

I note the remark by no means as a foolish eccentricity, but because it is really typical. I seem to remember that, as a boy, I met with a very similar assumption, though scarcely a similar implication, in Macaulay's *Essays*, which at that time I very carefully read. I thereupon purchased Rabelais in order to investigate for myself, and thus made the discovery that Rabelais is a great philosopher, a discovery which Macaulay had scarcely prepared me for, so that I imagined it to be original, until a few years later I chanced to light upon the observations of Coleridge concerning Rabelais' wonderful philosophic genius and his refined and exalted morality, and I realised for the first time — with an unforgettable thrill of joy — that I was not alone.

It seems clearly to be true that on the appearance in literature of the obscene — I use the word in a colourless and technical sense to indicate the usually unseen or obverse side of life, the side behind the scenes, the *post-scenia vitae* of Lucretius, and not implying anything necessarily objectionable — it at once for most readers covers the whole field of vision. The reader may like it or dislike, but his reaction, especially if he is English, seems to be so intense that it absorbs his whole psychic activity. (I say 'especially if he is English,' because, though this tendency seems universal, it is strongly emphasised in the Anglo-Saxon mind. Gaby Deslys has remarked that she has sometimes felt embarrassed on the London stage by finding that an attempt to arouse mere amusement has been received with intense seriousness: 'When I appear *en pantalons* the whole audience seems to hold its breath!') Henceforth the book is either to be cherished secretly and

silently, or else to be spoken of loudly with protest and vituperation. And this reaction is by no means limited to ignorant and unintelligent readers; it affects ordinary people, it affects highly intelligent and super-refined people, it may even affect eminent literary personages. The book may be by a great philosopher and contain his deepest philosophy, but let an obscene word appear in it, and that word will draw every reader's attention. Thus Shakespeare used to be considered an obscene writer, in need of expurgation, and may be so considered still, though his obscene passages even to our prudish modern ears are so few that they could surely be collected on a single page. Thus also it is that even the Bible, the God-inspired book of Christendom, has been judicially declared to be obscene. It may have been a reasonable decision, for judicial decision ought, no doubt, to reflect popular opinion; a judge must be judicial, whether or not he is just.

One wonders how far this is merely due to defective education and therefore modifiable, and how far it is based on an eradicable tendency of the human mind. Of course the forms of obscenity vary in every age, they are varying every day. Much which for the old Roman was obscene is not so for us; much which for us is obscene would have made a Roman smile at our simplicity. But even savages sometimes have obscene words not fit to utter in good aboriginal society, and a very strict code of propriety which to violate would be obscene. Rabelais in his immortal work wore a fantastic and extravagant robe, undoubtedly of very obscene texture, and it concealed from stupid eyes, as he doubtless desired that it should, one of the greatest and wisest spirits that ever lived. It would be pleasant to think that in the presence of such men who in their gay and daring and profound way present life in its wholeness and find it sweet, it may some day be the instinct of the ordinary person to enjoy the vision rever-

ently, if not on his knees, thanking his God for the privilege vouchsafed to him. But one has no sort of confidence that it will be so.

APRIL 27: Every garden tended by love is a new revelation, and to see it for the first time gives one a new thrill of joy, above all at this moment of the year when flowers are still young and virginal, yet already profuse and beautiful. It is the moment, doubtless, when Linnæus, according to the legend, saw a gorse-covered English common for the first time and fell on his knees to thank God for the sight. (I say 'legend,' for I find on consulting Fries that the story must be a praiseworthy English invention, since it was in August that Linnæus visited England.)

Linnæus, it may be said, was a naturalist. But it is not merely the naturalist who experiences this emotion; it is common to the larger part of humanity. Savages deck their bodies with flowers just as craftsmen and poets weave them into their work; the cottager cultivates his little garden, and the town artisan cherishes his flower-pots. However alien one's field of interest may be, flowers still make their appeal. I recall the revealing thrill of joy with which, on a certain day, a quite ordinary day nearly forty years ago, my eye caught the flash of the red roses amid the greenery of my verandah in the Australian bush. And this bowl of wall-flowers before me now — these old-fashioned, homely, shapeless, intimately fascinating flowers, with their faint ancient fragrance, their antique faded beauty, their symbolisation of the delicate and contented beauty of old age — seem to me fit for the altar of whatever might be my dearest god.

Why should flowers possess this emotional force? It is a force which is largely independent of association and quite abstracted from direct vital use. Flowers are purely imper-

sonal, they subserve neither of the great primary ends of life. They concern us even less than the sunset. And yet we are irresistibly impelled to 'consider the lilies.'

Surely it is as symbols, manifoldly complex symbols, that flowers appeal to us so deeply. They are, after all, the organs of sex, and for some creatures they are also the sources of food. So that if we only look at life largely enough flowers are in the main stream of vital necessity. They are useless to man, but man cannot cut himself off from the common trunk of life. He is related to the insects and even in the end to the trees. So that it may not be so surprising that while flowers are vitally useless to man they are yet the very loveliest symbols to him of all the things that are vitally useful. There is nothing so vitally intimate to himself that man has not seen it, and rightly seen it, symbolically embodied in flowers. Study the folk-nomenclature of plants in any country, or glance through Aigremont's *Volkserotik und Pflanzenwelt*. And the symbolisation is not the less fascinating because it is so obscure, so elusive, usually so unconscious, developed by sudden happy inspirations of peasant genius, and because I am altogether ignorant why the morbid and nameless tones of these curved and wrinkled wall-flowers delight me as they once delighted my mother, and so, it may be, backwards, through ancient generations who dwelt in parsonages whence their gaze caught the flowers which the seventeenth-century herbalist said in his *Paradisus Terrestris* are 'often found growing on the old walls of Churches.'

MAY 8: It is curious how there seems to be an instinctive disgust in Man for his own nearest ancestors and relations. If only Darwin could conscientiously have traced Man back to the Elephant or the Lion or the Antelope, how much ridicule and prejudice would have been

spared to the doctrine of Evolution! 'Monkey' and 'Worm' have been the bywords of reproach among the more supercilious of human beings, whether schoolboys or theologians. And it was precisely through the Anthropoid Apes, and more remotely the Annelids, that Darwin sought to trace the ancestry of Man. The Annelids have been rejected, but the Arachnids have taken their place.

Really the proud and the haughty have no luck in this world. They can scarcely perform their most elementary natural necessities with dignity, and they have had the misfortune to teach their flesh to creep before spiders and scorpions whom, it may be, they have to recognise as their own forefathers. Well for them that their high place is reserved in another world, and that Milton recognised 'obdurate pride' as the chief mark of Satan.

MAY 9: The words of Keats concerning the ocean's 'priestlike task of pure ablution' often come to my mind in this deserted Cornish bay. For it is on such a margin between sea and land over which the tide rolls from afar that alone — save in some degree on remote Australian hills — I have ever found the Earth still virginal and unstained by Man. Everywhere else we realise that the Earth has felt the embrace of Man, and been beautified thereby, it may be, or polluted. But here, as the tide recedes, all is ever new and fresh. Nature is untouched, and we see the gleam of her, smell the scent of her, hear the voice of her, as she was before ever life appeared on the Earth, or Venus had risen from the sea. This moment, for all that I perceive, the first Adam may not have been born or the caravel of the Columbus who discovered this new world never yet ground into the fresh-laid sand.

So when I come unto these yellow sands I come to kiss a pure and new-born Earth.

MAY 12: The name of Philip Thicknesse, at one time Governor of Landguard Fort, is not unknown to posterity. The echo of his bitter quarrel with his son by his second wife, Baron Audley, has come down to us. He wrote also the first biography of Gainsborough, whom he claimed to have discovered. Moreover (herein stealing a march on Wilhelm von Humboldt) he was the first to set on record a detailed enthusiastic description of Montserrat from the modern standpoint. It was this last achievement which led me to him.

Philip Thicknesse, I find, is well worth study for his own sake. He is the accomplished representative of a certain type of Englishman, a type, indeed, once regarded by the world at large outside England as that of the essential Englishman. The men of this type have, in fact, a passion for exploring the physical world, they are often found outside England, and for some strange reason they seem more themselves, more quintessentially English, when they are out of England. They are gentlemen and they are patriots. But they have a natural aptitude for disgust and indignation, and they cannot fail to find ample exercise for that aptitude in the affairs of their own country. So in a moment of passion they shake the dust of England off their feet to rush abroad, where, also, however — though they are far too intelligent to be inappreciative of what they find — they meet even more to arouse their disgust and indignation, and in the end they usually come back to England.

So it was with Philip Thicknesse. A lawsuit, with final appeal to the House of Lords, definitely deprived him of all hope of a large sum of money he considered himself entitled to. He at once resolved to abandon his own impossible country and settle in Spain. Accompanied by his wife and his two young daughters, he set out from Calais with his carriage, his horse, his manservant, and his monkey. A

discursive, disorderly, delightful book is the record of his journey through France into Catalonia, of his visit to Montserrat, which takes up the larger part of it, of the abandonment of his proposed settlement in Spain, and of his safe return with his whole retinue to Calais.

Thicknesse was an intelligent man and may be considered a good writer, for, however careless and disorderly, he is often vivid and usually amusing. He was of course something of a dilettante and antiquarian. He had a sound sense for natural beauty. He was an enthusiastic friend as well as a venomous enemy. He was infinitely tender to animals. His insolence could be unmeasured, and as he had no defect of courage it was just as likely to be bestowed on his superiors as on his subordinates. When I read him I am reminded of the advice given in my early (1847) copy of Murray's *Guide to France*: 'Our countrymen have a reputation for pugnacity in France; let them therefore be especially cautious not to make use of their fists.' Note Thicknesse's adventure with the dish of spinach. It was on the return journey. He had seen that spinach before it came to table. He gives several reasons why he objected to it, and they are excellent reasons. But notwithstanding his injunction the spinach was served, and thereupon the irate Englishman took up the dish and, dexterously reversing it, spinach and all, made therewith a hat for the serving-maid's head. From the ensuing hubbub and the *aubergiste's* wrath Thicknesse was delivered by the advent of a French gentleman who chivalrously declared (we are told) that he himself would have acted similarly. But one realises the picture of the typical Englishman which Thicknesse left behind him. It is to his influence and that of our fellow-countrymen who resembled him that we must attribute the evolution of the type of Englishman, arrogant, fantastic, original, who stalks through Continental traditions, down even till to-day, for we find him in Mr.

Thomas Tobyson of Tottenwood in Henri de Régnier's *La Double Maîtresse*. For the most part the manners and customs of this type of man are only known to us by hearsay which we may refuse to credit. But about Thicknesse there is no manner of doubt; he has written himself down; he is the veridic and positive embodiment of the type. That is his supreme distinction.

The type is scarcely that of the essential Englishman, yet it is one type, and a notably interesting type, really racy of the soil. Borrow — less of a fine gentleman than Thicknesse, but more of a genius — belonged to the type. Landor, a man cast in a much grander mould, was yet of the same sort, and the story which tells how he threw his Italian cook out of the window, and then exclaimed with sudden compunction, 'Good God! I forgot the violets,' is altogether in the spirit of Thicknesse. Trelawney was a man of this kind, and so was Sir Richard Burton. In later years the men of this type have tended, not so much to smooth their angularities as to attenuate and subtilise them, and we have Samuel Butler and Goldwin Smith, but in a rougher and more downright form there was much of the same temper in William Stead. They are an uncomfortable race of men, but in many ways admirable; we should be proud rather than ashamed of them. Their unreasonableness, their inconsiderateness, their irritability, their singular gleams of insight, their exuberant energy of righteous vituperation, the curious irregularities of their minds — however personally alien one may happen to find such qualities — can never fail to interest and delight.

MAY 13: When Aristotle declared that it is part of probability that the improbable should sometimes happen he invented a formula that is apt for the largest uses. Thus it is a part of justice that injustice should

sometimes be done, or, as Gourmont puts it, Injustice is one of the forms of Justice. There lies a great truth which most of the civilised nations of the world have forgotten.

On Candide's arrival in Portsmouth Harbour he found that an English admiral had just been solemnly shot, in the sight of the whole fleet, for having failed to kill as many Frenchmen as with better judgment he might have killed. 'Dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un amiral pour encourager les autres.' I suppose that Voltaire was alluding to the trial by court martial of Admiral Byng, which took place in Portsmouth Harbour in 1757, while he was writing *Candide*.

To encourage the others! England has been regarded as a model of political methods, and that is the method of justice by which, throughout the whole period of her vital development, she has ensured the purity and the efficiency of her political and social growth. Byng was shot in order that, some eighteen months later, Nelson might be brought into life. It was a triumphantly successful method. If our modern progress has carried us beyond that method it is only because progress means change rather than betterment.

Only think how swiftly and efficiently we might purify and ennoble our social structure if we had developed, instead of abandoning, this method. Think, for instance, of the infinite loss of energy, of health, of lives, the endless degradation of physical and spiritual beauty produced in London alone by the mere failure to prevent a few million chimneys from belching soot on the great city and choking all the activities of the vastest focus of activity in the world. Find the official whose inefficiency is responsible for this neglect, improvise a court to try him, and with all the deliberate solemnity and pageantry you can devise put him to death in the presence of all officialdom. And then picture the marvellous efficiency of his successor! In a few years' time

where would you find one smut of soot in London? Or, again, think of our complicated factory legislation and the terrible evils which still abound in our factories. Find a sufficiently high-placed official who is responsible for them, and practise the Byng method with him. Under his successor's rule, we may be sure, we should no longer recognise our death-rates, our disease-rates, and our accident rates, and the beautiful excuses which fill our factory inspectors' reports would no longer be needed. There is no body of officials, from the highest to the lowest, among whom the exercise of this ancient privilege would not conduce to the highest ends of justice and the furtherance of human welfare. People talk about the degradation of politics. They fail to see that it is inevitable when politics becomes a mere game. There was no degradation of politics when the Advisers of the Crown were liable to be executed. For it is Death, wisely directed towards noble ends, which gives Dignity to Life.

One may be quite sure that every fat and comfortable citizen (himself probably an official of some sort) on whom this argument may be pressed will take it as a joke in bad taste: 'Horrible! disgusting!' Yet that same citizen, stirring the contents of his morning newspaper into his muddy brain as he stirs his sugar in his coffee, will complacently absorb all the news of the day, so many hundred thousand men killed, wounded, or diseased in the course of the Balkan campaigns, so much ugly and hopeless misery all over the earth, and all avoidable, all caused, in the last analysis, by the incompetence, obstinacy, blindness, or greed of some highly placed official whose death at an earlier stage would have made for the salvation of the world.

And if any one still feels any doubt regarding the efficacy of this method, it is enough to point to our English kings. Every king of England has at the back of his mind a vision of a flashing axe on a frosty January morning nearly four cen-

turies ago. It has proved highly salutary in preserving them within the narrow path of Duty. Before Charles I English monarchs were an almost perpetual source of trouble to their people; they have scarcely ever given more than a moment's trouble since. And justice has herein been achieved by an injustice which has even worked out in Charles's favour. It has conferred upon him a prestige he could never have conferred upon himself. For of all our English monarchs since the Conquest he alone has become a martyr and a saint, so far as Protestantism can canonise anybody, and of all our dead kings he alone evokes to-day a living loyalty. Such a result is surely well worth a Decollation.

We have abandoned the method of our forefathers. And see the ignoble and feeble method we have put in its place. We cowardly promote our inefficient persons to the House of Lords, or similar obscure heights. We shelve them, or swathe them, or drop them. Sometimes, indeed, we apply a simulacrum of the ancient method of punishment, especially if the offence is sexual, but even there we have forgotten the correct method of its application, for in such cases the delinquent is usually an effective rather than an ineffective person, and when he has purged his fault we continue to punish him in petty and underhand ways, mostly degrading to those on whom they are inflicted and always degrading to those who inflict them. We have found no substitute for the sharper way of our ancestors, which was not only more effective socially, but even more pleasant for the victim. For if it was a cause of temporary triumph to his enemies, it was a source of everlasting exultation to his friends.

MAY 14: I was gazing at some tulips, the supreme image in our clime of gaiety in Nature, their globes of petals opening into chalices and painted with

spires of scarlet and orange wondrously mingled with a careless freedom that never goes astray, brilliant cups of delight serenely poised on the firm shoulders of their stalks, incarnate images of flame under the species of Eternity.

And by some natural transition my thoughts turned to the incident a scholarly member of Parliament chanced to mention to me yesterday, of his old student days in Paris, when early one evening he chanced to meet a joyous band of students, one of whom triumphantly bore a naked girl on his shoulders. In those days the public smiled or shrugged its shoulders: 'Youth will be youth.' To-day, in the Americanised Latin Quarter, the incident would merely serve to evoke the activities of the police.

Shall we, therefore, rail against the police, or the vulgar ideals of the mob whose minions they are? Rather let us look below the surface and admire the patient and infinite strategy of Nature. She is the same for ever and for ever, and can afford to be as patient as she is infinite, while she winds the springs of the mighty engine which always recoils on those who attempt to censor the staging of her Comedy or dim the radiance of the Earthly Spectacle.

And such is her subtlety that she even uses Man, her plaything, to accomplish her ends. Nothing can be more superbly natural than the tulip, and it was through the Brain of Man that Nature created the tulip.

MAY 16: It is an error to suppose that Solitude leads away from Humanity. On the contrary it is Nature who brings us near to Man, her spoilt and darling child. The enemies of their fellows are bred, not in deserts, but in cities, where human creatures fester together in heaps. The lovers of their fellows come out of solitude, like those hermits of the Thebaid, who fled far from cities, who

crucified the flesh, who seemed to hang to the world by no more than a thread, and yet were infinite in their compassion, and thought no sacrifice too great for a Human Being.

Here as I lie on the towans by a cloud of daisies among the waving and glistening grass, while the sea recedes along the stretching sands, and the cloudless sky throbs with the song of larks, and no human thing is in sight, it is, after all, of Humanity that I am most conscious. I realise that there is no human function so exalted or so rare, none so simple or so humble, that it has not its symbol in Nature; that if all the Beauty of Nature is in Man, yet all the Beauty of Man is in Nature. So it is that the shuttlecock of Beauty is ever kept in living movement.

It is known to many that we need Solitude to find ourselves. Perhaps it is not so well known that we need Solitude to find our fellows. Even the Saviour is described as reaching Mankind through the Wilderness.

MAY 20: Miss Lind-Af-Hageby has just published an enthusiastic though discriminating book on her distinguished fellow-countryman, August Strindberg, the first to appear in English. Miss Lind-Af-Hageby is known as the most brilliant, charming, and passionate opponent of the vivisection of animals. Strindberg is known as perhaps the most ferocious and skilful vivisector of the human soul. The literary idol of the arch-antivivisector of animals is the arch-vivisector of men. It must not be supposed, moreover, that Miss Lind-Af-Hageby overlooks this aspect of Strindberg, which would hardly be possible in any case; she emphasises it, though, it may be by a warning instinct rather than by deliberate intention, she carefully avoids calling Strindberg a 'vivisector,' using instead the less appropriate term 'dissector.' 'He dissected the human heart,' she says,

'laid bare its meanness, its uncleanness; made men and women turn on each other with sudden understanding and loathing, and walked away smiling at the evil he had wrought.'

I have often noted with interest that a passionate hatred of pain inflicted on animals is apt to be accompanied by a comparative indifference to pain inflicted on human beings, and sometimes a certain complaisance, even pleasure, in such pain. But it is rare to find the association so clearly presented. Pain is woven into the structure of life. It cannot be dispensed with in the vital action and reaction unless we dispense with life itself. We must all accept it somewhere if we would live at all; and in order that all may live we must not all accept it at the same point. Vivisection — as experiments on animals are picturesquely termed — is based on a passionate effort to combat human pain, anti-vivisection on a passionate effort to combat animal pain. In each case one set of psychic fibres has to be drawn tense, and another set relaxed. Only they do not happen to be the same fibres. We see the dynamic mechanism of the soul's force.

How exquisitely the world is balanced! It is easy to understand how the idea has arisen among so many various peoples, that the scheme of things could only be accounted for by the assumption of a Conscious Creator, who wrought it as a work of art out of nothing, *spectator ab extra*. It was a brilliant idea, for only such a Creator, and by no means the totality of the creation he so artistically wrought, could ever achieve with complete serenity the Enjoyment of Life.

MAY 23: I seem to see some significance in the popularity of *The Yellow Jacket*, the play at the Duke of York's Theatre 'in the Chinese manner,' and even more genuinely in the Chinese manner than its producers

openly profess. This significance lies in the fact that the Chinese manner of performing plays, like the Chinese manner of making pots, is the ideally perfect manner.

The people who feel as I feel take no interest in the modern English theatre and seldom have any wish to go near it. It combines the maximum of material reality with the maximum of spiritual unreality, an evil mixture but inevitable, for on the stage the one involves the other. Nothing can be more stodgy, more wearisome, more unprofitable, more away from all the finer ends of dramatic art. But I have always believed that the exponents of this theatrical method must in the end be the instruments of their own undoing, give them but rope enough. That is what seems to be happening. A reaction has been gradually prepared by Poel, Gordon Craig, Reinhardt, Barker; we have had a purified Shakespeare on the stage and a moderately reasonable Euripides. Now this *Yellow Jacket*, in which realism is openly flouted and a drama is played on the same principles as children play in the nursery, attracts crowds. They think they are being amused; they really come to a sermon. They are being taught the value of their own imaginations, the useful function of accepted conventions, and the proper meaning of illusion on the stage.

Material realism on the stage is not only dull, it is deadly; the drama dies at its touch. The limitations of reality on the stage are absurdly narrow; the great central facts of life become impossible of presentation. Nothing is left to the spectator: he is inert, a cypher, a senseless block.

All great drama owes its vitality to the fact that its spectator is not a mere passive block, but the living inspiration of the whole play. He is indeed himself the very stage on which the drama is enacted. He is more, he is the creator of the play. Here are a group of apparently ordinary persons, undoubtedly actors, furnished with beautiful garments and

little more, a few routine stage properties, and, above all, certain formal conventions, without which, as we see in Euripides and all great dramatists, there can be no high tragedy. Out of these mere nothings and the suggestions they offer, the Spectator, like God, creates a new world and finds it very good. It is his vision, his imagination, the latent possibilities of his soul that are in play all the time.

Every great dramatic stage the world has seen, in Greece, in Spain, in Elizabethan England, in France, has been ordered on these lines. The great dramatist is not a juggler trying to impose an artifice on his public as a reality; he sets himself in the spectator's heart. Shakespeare was well aware of this principle of the drama; Prospero is the Ideal Spectator of the Theatre.

MAY 31: It often impresses me with wonder that in Nature or in Art exquisite beauty is apt to appear other than it is. Jules de Gaultier seeks to apply to human life a principle of Bovarism by which we always naturally seek to appear other than we are, as Madame Bovary sought, as sought all Flaubert's personages, and indeed, less consciously on their creator's part, Gaultier claims, the great figures in all fiction. But sometimes I ask myself whether there is not in Nature herself a touch of Madame Bovary.

There is, however, this difference in the Bovarism of Nature's most exquisite moments. They seem other than they are not by seeming more than they are but by seeming less. It is by the attenuation of the medium, by an approach to obscurity, by an approximation to the faintness of a dream, that Beauty is manifested. I recall the Greek head of a girl once shown at the Burlington Fine Arts Club — over which Rodin, who chanced to see it there, grew rapturous — and it

seemed to be without substance or weight and almost transparent. 'Las Meninas' scarcely seems to me a painting made out of solid pigments laid on to a material canvas, but rather a magically evoked vision that at any moment may tremble and pass out of sight. And when I awoke in the dawn a while ago, and saw a vase of tulips on the background of the drawn curtain over a window before me, the scene was so interpenetrated by the soft and diffused light that it seemed altogether purged of matter and nothing but mere Loveliness remained. There are flowers the horticulturist delights to develop which no longer look like living and complex organisms, but only gay fragments of crinkled tissue-paper cut at random by the swift hand of a happy artist. James Hinton would be swept by emotion as he listened to some passage in Mozart. 'And yet,' he would say, 'there is nothing in it.' Blake said much the same of the drawings of Dürer. Even the Universe is perhaps built on the same plan. 'In all probability matter is composed mainly of holes,' said Sir J. J. Thomson a few years ago; and almost at the same moment Poincaré was declaring that 'there is no such thing as matter, there is only holes in the ether.' The World is made out of Nothing, and all Supernal Beauty would seem to be an approach to the Divine Mystery of Nothingness. 'Clay is fashioned, and thereby the pot is made; but it is its hollowness that makes it useful,' said the first and greatest of the Mystics. 'By cutting out doors and windows the room is formed; it is the space which makes the room's use. So that when things are useful it is that in them which is Nothing which makes them useful.' Use is the symbol of Beauty, and it is through the doors and the windows of Beautiful Things that their Beauty emerges. — Man himself, 'the Beauty of the World,' emerges on the world through the door of a Beautiful Thing.

JUNE 5: 'A French gentleman, well acquainted with the constitution of his country, told me above eight years since that France increased so rapidly in peace that they must necessarily have a war every twelve or fourteen years to carry off the refuse of the people.' So Thicknesse wrote in 1776, and he seems to have accepted the statement as unimpeachable. Indeed, he lived long enough to see the beginning of the deadliest wars in which France ever engaged. The French were then the most military people in Europe. Now they are the leaders in the great modern civilising movement of Anti-Militarism. To what predominant influence are we to attribute that movement? To Christianity? Most certainly not. To Humanitarianism? There is not the slightest reason to believe it. The ultimate and fundamental ground on which the most civilised nations of to-day are becoming Anti-Militant, and why France is at the head of them, is — there can be no reasonable doubt — the Decline in the Birth-Rate. Men are no longer cheap enough to be used as food for cannon. If their rulers fail to realise that, it will be the worse for those rulers. The people of the nations are growing resolved that they will no longer be treated as 'Refuse.' The real refuse, they are beginning to believe, already ripe for destruction, are those Obscurantists who set their backs to Civilisation and Humanity, and clamour for a return of that ill-fated recklessness in procreation from which the world suffered so long, the ancient motto, 'Increase and multiply' — never meant for use in our modern world — still clinging so firmly to the dry walls of their ancient skulls that nothing will ever scrape it off. The best that can be said for them is that they know not what they talk of.

It is really a very good excuse and may serve to save them from the bloody fate they are so eager to send others to. They are entitled to contend that it holds good even of the wisest.

For who knows what he talks about when he talks of even the simplest things in the world, the sky or the sunshine or the water?

JUNE 15 : Am I indeed so unreasonable to care so much whether the sun shines? The very world, to our human eyes, seems to care. It only bursts into life, it only bursts even into the semblance of life, when the sun shines. All this anti-cyclonic day the sky has been cloudless, and for three hours on the sea the wavelets have been breaking into sudden flashes and spires of silver flower-like flames, while on the reflecting waters afar it has seemed as though a myriad argent swallows were escorting me to the coasts of France.

In the evening, in Paris, the glory of the day has still left a long delicious echo in the air and on the sky. I wander along the quays, and by a sudden inspiration go to seek out the philosophic hermit of the Rue des Saints Pères, but even he is not at home to-night, so up and down the silent quays I wander, aimlessly and joyously, to inhale the fragrance of Paris and the loveliness of the night, before I leave in the morning for Spain.

JUNE 19: As I entered Santa Maria del Mar this morning by the north door, and glanced along the walls under the particular illumination of the moment (for in these Spanish churches of subdued light the varying surprises of illumination are endless), there flashed on me a new swift realisation of an old familiar fact. How mediæval it is! Those grey walls and the ancient sacred objects disposed on them with a strange irregular harmony, they seem to be as mediæval hands left them yesterday. And indeed every aspect of this church — which to me has always been romantic and

beautiful — can scarcely have undergone any substantial change. Even the worshippers must have changed but little, for this is the church of the workers, and the Spanish woman's workaday costume bears little mark of any specific century. If Cervantes were to return to this district — perhaps to this district alone — of the city he loved, it is hard to see what he would note afresh, save the results of natural decay and the shifting of the social centre of gravity.

Whenever I enter an old Spanish church, in the south or in the north, still intact in its material details, in the observance of its traditions, in its antique grandiosity or loveliness, nearly always there is a latent fear at my heart. Who knows how long these things will be left on the earth? Even if they escape the dangers due to the ignorance or carelessness of their own guardians, no one knows what swift destruction may not at any moment overtake them.

In the leading article of the Barcelonese *Diluvio* to-day I read:

The unity which marked the Middle Ages is broken into an infinite variety of opinions and beliefs. Everywhere else, however, except in our country, there has been formed a gradation, a rhythm, of ideas, passing from the highest to the deepest notes of the scale. There are radicals in politics, in religion, in philosophy; there are also reactionaries in all these fields; but it is the intermediate notes, conciliatory, more or less eclectic, which constitute the nucleus on which every society must depend. In Spain this central nucleus has no existence. Here in all orders of thought there are only the two extremes: *all or nothing*.

And the article concludes by saying that this state of things is so threatening to the nation that some pessimists are already standing, watch in hand, to count the moments of Spain's existence.

This tendency of the Spanish spirit, which there can be little doubt about, may not threaten the existence of Spain,

but it threatens the existence of the last great fortress of mediæval splendour and beauty and romance. France, the chosen land of Saintliness and Catholicism, has been swept clear of mediævalism. England, even though it is the chosen land of Compromise, has in the sphere of religion witnessed destructive revolutions and counter-revolutions. What can save the Church in Spain from perishing by that sword of Intolerance which it has itself forged?

JUNE 20: In a side-chapel there is a large and tall Virgin, with seemingly closed eyes, a serene and gracious personage. Before this image of the Virgin Mother kneels a young girl, devoutly no doubt, though with a certain careless familiarity, with her dark hair down, and on her head the little transparent piece of lace which the Spanish woman, even the smallest Spanish girl-child, unlike the free-spirited Frenchwoman, never fails to adjust as she enters a church.

I have no sympathy with those who look on the Bible as an outworn book and the Church as an institution whose symbols are empty of meaning. It is a good thing that, somewhere amid our social order or disorder, the Mother whose child has no father save God should be regarded as an object of worship. It would be as well to maintain the symbol of that worship until we have really incorporated it into our hearts and are prepared in our daily life to worship the Mother whose child has no known father save God. It is not the final stage in family evolution, certainly, but a step in the right direction. So let us be thankful to the Bible for stating it so divinely and keeping it before our eyes in such splendid imagery.

The official guardians of the Bible have always felt it to be a dangerous book, to be concealed, as the Jews concealed their sacred things in the ark. When after many centuries

they could no longer maintain the policy of concealing it in a foreign tongue which few could understand, a brilliant idea occurred to them. They flung the Bible in the vulgar tongue in millions of copies at the heads of the masses. And they dared them to understand it! This audacity has been justified by the results. A sublime faith in Human Imbecility has seldom led those who cherish it astray.

No wonder they feel so holy a horror of Eugenics!

JUNE 22: I can see, across the narrow side-street, that a room nearly opposite the windows of my room at the hotel is occupied by tailors, possibly a family of them — two men, two women, two girls. They seem to be always at work, from about eight in the morning until late in the evening; even Sunday seems to make only a little difference, for to-day is Sunday, and they have been at work until half-past seven. They sit, always in the same places, round a table, near the large French windows which are constantly kept open. At the earliest sign of dusk the electric light suspended over the table shines out. They rarely glance through the window, though certainly there is little to see, and I am not sure that they go away for meals; I sometimes see them munching a roll, and the Catalan water-pot is always at hand to drink from. If it were not that I know how the Catalan can live by night as well as by day, I should say that this little group can know nothing whatever of the vast and variegated Barcelonese world in whose heart they live, that it is nothing to them that all last night Barcelona was celebrating St. John's Eve (now becoming a movable festival in the cities) with bonfires and illuminations and festivities of every kind, or that at the very same moment in this same city the soldiery were shooting down the people who never cease to protest against the war in Morocco. They are

mostly good-looking, neatly dressed, cheerful, animated; they talk and gesticulate; they even play, the men and the girls battering each other for a few moments with any harmless weapons that come to hand. They are always at work, yet it is clear that they have not adopted the heresy that man was made for work.

I am reminded of another workroom I once overlooked in a London suburb where three men tailors worked from very early till late. But that was a very different spectacle. They were careworn, sordid, carelessly half-dressed creatures, and they worked with ferocity, without speaking, with the monotonous routine of machines at high pressure. They were tragic in the fury of their absorption in their work. They might have been the Fates spinning the destinies of the world.

A marvellous thing how pliant the human animal is to work! Certainly it is no Gospel of Work that the world needs. It has ever been the great concern of the lawgivers of mankind, not to ordain work, but, as we see so interestingly in the Mosaic Codes, to enjoin holidays from work.

JUNE 23: At a little station on the Catalonian-Pyrenean line near Vich a rather thin, worn-looking young woman alighted from the second-class carriage next to mine, and was greeted by a stout matronly woman and a plump young girl with beaming face. These two were clearly mother and daughter, and I suppose that the careworn new-comer from the city, though it was less obviously so, was an elder daughter. The two women greeted each other with scarcely a word, but they stood close together for a few moments, and slight but visible waves of emotion ran sympathetically down their bodies. Then the elder woman tenderly placed her arm beneath the other's, and they walked slowly away, while the radiant girl, on the other side of the newcomer, lovingly gave

a straightening little tug to the back of her jacket, as though it needed it.

One sets out for a new expedition into the world always with a concealed unexpressed hope that one will see something new. But in our little European world one never sees anything new. There is merely a little difference in the emotions, a little finer or a little coarser, a little more open or a little more restrained, a little more or a little less charm in the expression of them. But they are everywhere just the same human emotions manifested in substantially the same ways.

It is not indeed always quite the same outside Europe. It is not the same in Morocco. I always remember how I never grew tired of watching the Moors in even the smallest operation of their daily life. For it always seemed that their actions, their commonest actions, were set to a rhythm which to a European was new and strange. Therefore it was infinitely fascinating.

JUNE 24: Saint John's Eve was celebrated here in Ripoll on the correct, or, as the Catalans call it, the classical, date last night. The little market-place was full of animation. (The church, I may note, stands in the middle of the Plaza, and the market is held in the primitive way all round the church, the market-women's stalls clinging close to its walls.) Here for hours, and no doubt long after I had gone to bed, the grave, sweet Catalan girls were dancing with their young men, in couples or in circles, and later I was awakened by the singing of Catalan songs which reminded me a little of Cornish carols. The Catalan girls, up in these Pyrenean heights, are perhaps more often seriously beautiful than in Barcelona, though here, too, they are well endowed with the substantial, homely, good-humoured Catalan graces. But

here they do their hair straight and low on the brows on each side and fasten it in knots near the nape of the neck, so they have an air of distinction which sometimes recalls the Florentine women of Ghirlandajo's or Botticelli's portraits. The solar festival of Saint John's Eve is perhaps the most ancient in our European world, but even in this remote corner of it the dances seem to have lost all recognised connection with the bonfires, which in Barcelona are mostly left to the children. This dancing is just human, popular dancing to the accompaniment, sad to tell, of a mechanical piano. Yet even as such it is attractive, and I lingered around it. For I am English, very English, and I spend much of my time in London, where dancing in the street is treated by the police as 'disorderly conduct.' For only the day before I left a London magistrate admonished a man and woman placed in the dock before him for this heinous offence of dancing in the street, which gave so much pleasure to my Catalan youths and maidens all last night: 'This is not a country in which people can afford to be jovial. You must cultivate a spirit of melancholy if you want to be safe. Go away and be as sad as you can.'

JUNE 25: Up here on the solitary mountain side, with Ripoll and its swirling, roaring river and many bridges below me, I realise better the admirable position of this ancient monastery city, so admirable that even to-day Ripoll is a flourishing little town. The river has here formed a flat, though further on it enters a narrow gorge, and the mountains open out into an amphitheatre. It is, one sees, on a large and magnificent scale, precisely the site which always commended itself to the monks of old, and not least to the Benedictines when they chose the country for their houses instead of the town, and here, indeed, they were at the outset

far away from any great centre of human habitation. Founded, according to the Chronicles, in the ninth century by Wilfred the Shaggy, the first independent Count of Barcelona, one suspects that the selection of the spot was less an original inspiration of the Shaggy Count's than put into his head by astute monks, who have modestly refrained from mentioning their own part in the transaction. In any case they flourished, and a century later, when Montserrat had been devastated by the Moors, it was restored and repopled by monks from Ripoll. In their own house they were greatly active. There is the huge monastery of which so much still remains, not a beautiful erection, scarcely even interesting for the most part, massive, orderly, excessively bare, but with two features which will ever make it notable, its Romanesque cloisters with the highly variegated capitals, and the sculptured western portal. This is regarded as one of the earliest works of sculpture in Spain, and certainly it has some very primitive, one may even say Iberian, traits, for the large *toro*-like animals recall Iberian sculpture. Yet it is a great work, largely and systematically planned, full of imaginative variety; at innumerable points it anticipates what the later more accomplished Gothic sculptors were to achieve, and I suspect, indeed, that much of its apparent lack of executive skill is due to wearing away of the rather soft stone the sculptors used. In the capitals of the cloisters — certainly much later — a peculiarly hard stone has been chosen, and, notwithstanding, the precision and expressive vigour of these artists is clearly shown. But the great portal, a stupendous work of art, as we still dimly perceive it to be, wrought nearly a thousand years ago in this sheltered nook of the Pyrenees, lingers in the memory. Also, like so many other things in the far Past, its crumbling outlines scatter much ancient dust over what we vainly call Modern Progress.

JUNE 26: Every supposed improvement in methods of travelling seems to me to sacrifice more than it gains; it gains speed, but it sacrifices nearly everything else, even comfort. Yet, I fear, there is a certain unreality in one's lamentations over the decay of the ancient methods; one is still borne on the stream. I have long wanted to cross the Pyrenees, and certainly I should prefer to cross them leisurely, as Thicknesse would have done (had he not preferred to elude them by the easier and beaten road), in one's own carriage. But, failing that, surely I ought to have walked, or, at least, to have travelled by the diligence. Yet I cannot escape the contagious disease of Modernity, and I choose to be whirled through the most delicious and restful scenery in the world, at the most perfect moment of the year, in three hours (including the interval for lunch) in a motor-bus, while any stray passengers on the road, as by common accord, plant themselves on the further side of the nearest big tree until our fearsome engine of modernity has safely passed. It is an adventure I scarcely feel proud of.

Yet even this hurried whirl has not been too swift to leave memories which will linger long and exquisitely, among far other scenes, even with a sense of abiding peace. How often shall I recall the exhilaration of this clear, soft air of the mountains, touched towards the summits by the icy breath of the snow, these glimpses of swift streams and sudden cascades, the scent of the pine forests, the intense flame of full-flowered broom, and perhaps more than all, the trees, as large as almond trees, of richly blossomed wild roses now fully out, white roses and pink roses, which abound along these winding roads among the mountains. Where else can there be such wild rose trees?

JUNE 27: It is, I suppose, more than twenty years since I stopped at Perpignan for the night, on the eve of first entering Spain, and pushed open in the twilight the little door of the Cathedral, and knew with sudden deep satisfaction the beauty and originality of Catalonian architecture. The city of Perpignan has emerged into vigorous modern life since then, but the Cathedral remains the same and still calls me with the same voice. It seems but yesterday that I entered it. And there, at the same spot, in the second northern bay, the same little lamp is still twinkling, each faint throb seemingly the last, as in memory it has twinkled for twenty years.

JUNE 28: Nowhere, it is said, are the offices of the Church more magnificently presented than in Barcelona. However this may be, I nowhere feel so much as in Spain that whatever may happen to Christianity it is essential that the ancient traditions of the Mass should be preserved, and the churches of Catholicism continue to be the arena of such Sacred Operas as the Mass, their supreme and classic type.

I do not assert that it need necessarily be maintained as a Religious Office. There are serious objections to the attempt at divine officiation by those who have no conviction of their own Divine Office. There are surely sufficient persons, even in pessimistic and agnostic Spain, to carry on the Mass in sincerity for a long time to come. When sincerity failed, I would hold that the Mass as an act of religion had come to an end.

It would remain as Art. As Art, as the embodied summary of a great ancient tradition, a supreme moment in the spiritual history of the world, the Mass would retain its vitality as surely as Dante's *Divine Comedy* retains its vitality, even though the stage of that Comedy has no more reality for most

modern readers than the stage of Punch and Judy. So it is here. The Play of the Mass has been wrought through centuries out of the finest intuitions, the loftiest aspirations, of a long succession of the most sensitively spiritual men of their time. Its external shell of superstition may fall away. But when that happens the play will gain rather than lose. It will become clearly visible as the Divine Drama it is, the embodied presentation of the Soul's Great Adventure, the symbolic Initiation of the Individual into the Spiritual Life of the World.

It is not only for the perpetuation of the traditions of the recognised Sacred Offices that Churches such as the Spanish churches continue to constitute the ideal stage. Secular drama arises out of sacred drama, and at its most superb moments (as we see, earlier than Christianity, in the *Bacchae*, the final achievement of the mature art of Euripides) it still remains infused with the old sacred spirit and even the old sacred forms, for which the Church remains the only fitting background. It might possibly be so for *Parsifal*. Of all operas since *Parsifal* that I have seen, the *Ariane et Barbe Bleue* of Dukas and Maeterlinck seems to me the most beautiful, the most exalted in conception, the most finely symbolic, and surely of all modern operas it is that in which the ideas and the words, the music, the stage pictures, are wrought with finest artistry into one harmonious whole. It seems to me that the emotions aroused by such an Opera as *Ariane* could only be fittingly expressed — unecclesiastical as Blue Beard's character may appear — in the frame of one of these old Catalonian churches. The unique possibilities of the church for dramatic art constitute one of the reasons why I shudder at the thought that these wonderful and fascinating buildings may some day be swept of their beauty and even torn down.

JUNE 29: I have always felt a certain antipathy — unreasonable, no doubt — to Brittany, and never experienced any impulse to enter it. Now that I have done so the chances of my route have placed my entry at Nantes, where the contact of neighbouring provinces may well have modified the Breton characteristics. Yet they seem to me quite pronounced, and scarcely affected even by the vigorous and mercantile activity of this large city. A large and busy city, and yet I feel that I am among a people who are, ineradically, provincial peasants, men and women of a temper impervious to civilisation. Here too are those symbols of peasantry, the white caps of endless shape and fashion which seem to exert such an attraction on the sentimental English mind. Yet they are not by any means beautiful. And what terrible faces they enfold — battered, shapeless, featureless faces that may have been tossed among granite rocks, but seem never to have been moulded by human intercourse. The young girls are often rather pretty, sometimes coquettish, with occasionally a touch of careless abandonment which reminds one of England rather than of France. But the old women — one can scarcely believe that these tragic, narrow-eyed, narrow-spirited old women are next neighbours to the handsome, jovial old women of Normandy. And the old men, to an extent that surely is seldom found, are the exact counterparts of the old women, with just the same passive, battered, pathetic figures. (I recall the remark of an English friend who has lived much in Brittany, that these people look as though they were still living under the Ancient Régime.) I know I shall never forget the congregation that I saw gathered together in the Cathedral at High Mass this Sunday morning, largely made up of these poor old decayed abortions of humanity, all moved by the most intense and absorbed devotion.

There is something gay and open about this Cathedral.

The whole ritual is clear to view; there is a lavish display of scarlet in the choir upholstery; the music is singularly swift and cheerful; the whole tone of the place is bright and joyous. One cannot but realise how perfectly such a worship is adapted to such worshippers. Surely an accomplished ecclesiastical art and insight have been at work here. We seem to see a people scarcely made for this world, and sunk in ruts of sorrow, below the level of humanity, where no hope is visible but the sky. And here is their sky! How can it be but that they should embrace the vision with a fervour surely unparalleled in Christendom outside Russia.

JULY 4: Feeble little scraps of reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry have been familiar to me since I was a child. Yet until to-day I entered the room opposite the Cathedral where it has lately been simply but fittingly housed, I never imagined, and no one had ever told me, how splendid a work of art it is. Nothing could be more unpretentious, more domestic in a sense, with almost the air of our grandmothers' samplers, than this long strip of embroidered canvas, still so fresh in its colours that it might have been finished, if indeed it is finished, yesterday. It is technically crude, childishly conventionalised, wrought with an enforced economy of means. Yet how superbly direct and bold in the presentation of the narrative, in the realism of the essential details, in all this marshalling of ships and horses and men, in this tragic multiplication of death on the battlefield. One feels behind it the fine and free energy of a creative spirit. It is one of our great European masterpieces of art, a glory alike for Normans and for English. It is among the things that once known must live in one's mind to recur to memory with a thrill of exhilaration. There is in it the spirit of another great Norman work of art, the *Chanson de Roland*; there is even

in it the spirit of Homer, or the spirit of Flaubert, 'the French Homer,' as Gourmont has called him, who lived and worked so few miles away from this city of Bayeux.

JULY 9: Now that I have again crossed Normandy, this time from the southwest, I see the old puzzle of the architectural quality of the Norman from a new aspect. Certainly the Normans seem to have had a native impulse to make large, strong, bold buildings. But the æsthetic qualities of these buildings seem sometimes to me a little doubtful. Surely Coutances must lie in a thoroughly Norman district; it possesses three great churches, of which Saint Nicolas pleases me most; the Cathedral, even in its strength and originality, makes no strong appeal to me. I find more that is attractive in Bayeux Cathedral, which is a stage nearer to the Seine. And I have asked myself this time whether the architectural phenomena of Normandy may not be explained precisely by this presence of the Seine, running right through the middle of it, and of its capital city, Rouen, which is also its great architectural centre. What is architecturally of the first quality in Normandy and the neighbouring provinces seems to me now to lie on the Seine, or within some fifty miles of its banks. That would include Bayeux and Chartres to the south, as well as Amiens and Beauvais to the north. So I ask myself whether what we see in this region may not be the result of the great highway passing through it. Have we not here, perhaps, action and reaction between the massive constructional spirit of Normandy and the exquisite inventive æsthetic spirit of the Île de France?

JULY 12: Certainly June, at all events as I have known it this year, is the ideal month for rambling through Europe. Here along the Norman coast, indeed, at

Avranches and Fécamp, one encounters a damp cloudiness to remind one that England is almost within sight. Yet during a month in Spain and in France, in the Pyrenees and in Normandy, it has never been too hot or too cold, during the whole time I have scarcely so much as seen rain. Everywhere my journey has been an endless procession of summer pageantry, of greenery that is always fresh, of flowers that have just reached their hour of brilliant expansion. 'To travel is to die continually'; and I have had occasion to realise the truth of the saying during the past few weeks. But I shall not soon forget the joy of this wild profusion of flowers scattered all along my path, for two thousand miles — the roses and lilies, the broom and the poppies.

JULY 18: When one considers that Irony which seems so prevailing a note of human affairs, if we choose to regard human affairs from the theological standpoint, it is interesting to remember that the most pronounced intellectual characteristic of Jesus, whom the instinct of the populace recognised as the Incarnation of God, was, in the wider sense, a ferocious Irony. God is Love, said St. John. The popular mind seems to have had an obscure conviction that God is Irony. And it is in his own image, let us remember, that Man creates God.

JULY 29: In his essay on 'The Comparative Anatomy of Angels,' Fechner, the father of experimental psychology, argued that angels can have no legs. For if we go far down in the animal scale we find that centipedes have God knows how many legs; then come butterflies and beetles with six, and then mammals with four; then come birds, which resemble angels by their free movement through space, and

man, who by his own account is half an angel, with only two legs; in the final step to the angelic state of spherical perfection the remaining pair of legs must finally disappear. (Indeed, Origen is said to have believed that the Resurrection body would be spherical.)

One is reminded of Fechner's playful satire by the spectacle of those poets who ape angelic modes of progression. The poet who desires to achieve the music of the spheres may impart to his movement the planetary impulse if he can suggest to our ears the illusion of the swift rush of rustling wings, but he must never forget that in reality he still possesses legs, and that these legs have to be accounted for, and reckoned in the constitution of metre. Every poet must still move with feet, feet that must be exquisitely sensitive to the earth's touch, impeccably skilful to encounter every obstacle on the way with the joyous flashing of his feet. The most splendidly angelic inspirations will not suffice to compensate the poet for feet that draggle in the mud, or stumble higgledy-piggledy among stony words, which his toes should have kissed into jewels.

We find this well illustrated in a quite genuine poet whose biography has just been published. In some poems of Francis Thompson we see that the poet seeks to fling himself into a planetary course, forgetting, and hoping to hypnotise his readers into forgetting, that the poet has feet. He thereby takes his place in the group which Matthew Arnold termed that of Ineffectual Angels. Arnold, it is true, a pedagogue rather than a critic, invented this name for Shelley, whom it scarcely fits. For Shelley, whose feet almost keep pace with his wings, more nearly belongs to the Effectual Angels.

AUGUST 3: In our modern life an immense stress is placed on the value of Morality. Very little stress is placed on the value of Immorality. I do not, of

course, use the words 'Morality' and 'Immorality' in any question-begging way as synonymous of 'goodness' and of 'badness,' but, technically, as names for two different sorts of socially-determined impulses. Morality covers those impulses, of a more communal character, which conform to the standards of action openly accepted at a given time and place; Immorality stands for those impulses, of a more individual character, which fail so to conform. Morality is, more concisely, the *mores* of the moment; Immorality is the *mores* of some other moment, it may be a better, it may be a worse moment. Every nonconformist action is immoral, but whether it is thereby good, bad, or indifferent remains another question. Jesus was immoral; so also was Barabbas.

The more one knows of the real lives of people the more one perceives how large a part of them is lived in the sphere of Immorality and how vitally important that part is. It is not the part shown to the world, the mechanism of its activities remains hidden. Yet those activities are so intimate and so potent that in a large proportion of cases it is in their sphere that we must seek the true motive force of the man or woman, who may be a most excellent person, one who lays, indeed, emphatically and honestly, the greatest stress on the value of the impulses of Morality. 'The passions are the winds which fill the sails of the vessel,' said the hermit to Zadig, and Spinoza had already said the same thing in other words. The passions are by their nature Immoralities. To Morality is left the impulses which guide the rudder, of little value when no winds blow.

Thus to emphasise the value of Immorality is not to diminish the value of Morality. They are both alike necessary. ('Everything is dangerous here below, and everything is necessary.') There should be no call on us to place the stress on one side at the expense of the other side. When Carducci, with thoughts directed on the intellectual history of humanity,

wrote his hymn to Satan, it was as the symbol of the revolutionary power of reason that he sang the triumph of Satan over Jehovah. But no such triumph of Immorality over Morality can be foreseen or desired. When we place ourselves at the high biological standpoint we see the vital necessity of each. It is necessary to place the stress on both.

If we ask ourselves why at the present moment the sphere of Morality seems to have acquired, not in actual life, but in popular esteem, an undue prominence over the sphere of Immorality, we may see various tendencies at work, and perhaps not uninfluentially the decay of Christianity. For Religion has always been the foe of Morality, and has always had a sneer for 'mere Morality.' Religion stands for the Individual as Morality stands for Society. Religion is the champion of Grace; it pours contempt on 'Law,' the stronghold of Morality, even annuls it. The Pauline and pseudo-Pauline Epistles are inexhaustible on this theme. The Catholic Church with its Absolution and its Indulgences could always override Morality, and Protestantism, for all its hatred of Absolution and of Indulgences, by the aid of Faith and of Grace easily maintained exactly the same conquest over Morality. So the decay of Christianity is the fall of the Sublime Guardian of Immorality.

One may well ask oneself whether it is not a pressing need of our time to see to it that these two great and seemingly opposed impulses are maintained in harmonious balance, by their vital tension to further those Higher Ends of Life to which Morality and Immorality alike must be held in due subjection.

AUGUST 18: How marvellous is the Humility of Man! I find it illustrated in nothing so much as in his treatment of his Idols and Gods. With a charming irony

the so-called 'Second Isaiah' described how the craftsman deals with mere ordinary wood or stone which he puts to the basest purposes; 'and the residue thereof he maketh a God.' One wonders whether Isaiah ever realised that he himself was the fellow of that craftsman. He also had moulded his Jehovah out of the residue of his own ordinary emotions and ideas. But that application of his own irony probably never occurred to Isaiah, and if it had he was too wise a prophet to mention it.

Man makes his God and places Him, with nothing to rest on, in a Chaos, and imposes on Him the task of introducing life and order, everything indeed, out of His own Divine Brains. To the savage theologian and his more civilised successors that seems an intelligent theory of the Universe. They fail to see that they have merely removed an inevitable difficulty a stage further back. (And we can understand the reply of the irritable old-world theologian to one who asked what God was doing before the creation: 'He was making rods for the backs of fools.') For the Evolution of a Creator is no easier a problem than the Evolution of a Cosmos.

The theologians, with their ineradicable anthropomorphic conceptions, have never been able to see how stupendous an anachronism they committed (without even taking the trouble to analyse Time) when they placed God prior to His Created Universe in the void and formless Nebula. Such a God would not have been worth the mist He was made of.

It is only when we place God at the End, not at the Beginning, that the Universe falls into order. God is an Unutterable Sigh in the Human Heart, said the old German mystic. And therewith said the last word.

AUGUST 21: Is not a certain aloofness essential to our vision of the Heaven of Art?

As I write, I glance up from time to time at the open door of a schoolhouse, and am aware of a dim harmony of soft, rich, deep colour and atmosphere framed by the doorway and momentarily falling into a balanced composition, purified of details by obscurity, the semblance of a Velasquez. Doors and windows and gateways vouchsafe to us perpetually the vision of a beauty apparently remote from the sphere of our sorrow, and the impression of a room as we gaze into it from without through the window is more beautiful than when we move within it. Every picture, the creation of the artist's eye and hand, is a vision seen through a window.

It is the delight of mirrors that they give something of the same impression as I receive from the schoolhouse doorway. In music-halls, and restaurants, and other places where large mirrors hang on the walls, we may constantly be entranced by the lovely and shifting pictures of the commonplace things which they chance to frame. In the atmosphere of mirrors there always seems to be a depth and tone which eludes us in the actual direct vision. Mirrors cut off sections of the commonplace real world and hold them aloof from us in a sphere of beauty. From the days of the Greeks and Etruscans to the days of Henri de Régnier a peculiar suggestion of æsthetic loveliness has thus always adhered to the mirror. The most miraculous of pictures created by man, 'Las Meninas,' resembles nothing so much as the vision momentarily floated on a mirror. In this world we see 'as in a glass darkly,' said Saint Paul, and he might have added that in so seeing we see more and more beautifully than we can ever hope to see 'face to face.'

There is sometimes even more deliciously the same kind of lovely attraction in the reflection of lakes and canals, and languid rivers and the pools of fountains. Here reality is

mirrored so faintly and tremulously, so brokenly, so as it seems evanescently, that the simplest things may be purged and refined into suggestions of exquisite beauty. Again and again some scene of scarcely more than commonplace charm — seen from some bridge at Thetford, or by some canal at Delft, some pond in Moscow — imprints itself on the memory for ever, because one chances to see it under the accident of fit circumstance reflected in the water.

Still more mysterious, still more elusive, still more remote are the glorious visions of the external world which we may catch in a polished copper bowl, as in crystals and jewels and the human eye. Well might Böhme among the polished pots of his kitchen receive intimation of the secret light of the Universe.

In a certain sense there is more in the tremulously faint and far reflection of a thing than there is in the thing itself. The dog who preferred the reflection of his bone in the water to the bone itself, though from a practical point of view he made a lamentable mistake, was æsthetically justified. No 'orb,' as Tennyson said, is a 'perfect star' while we walk therein. Aloofness is essential to the Beatific Vision. If we entered its portals Heaven would no longer be Heaven.

AUGUST 23: I never grow weary of the endless charm of English parish churches. The more one sees of them the more one realises what fresh, delightful surprises they hold. Nothing else in England betrays so well the curious individuality, the fascinating tendency to incipient eccentricity, which marks the English genius. Certainly there are few English churches one can place beside some of the more noble and exquisitely beautiful French churches, such a church, for instance, as that of Caudebec on the Seine. But one will nowhere find such a series of variously delightful churches springing out of concretely diversified minds.

Here at Maldon I enter the parish church in the centre of the town, and find that the tower, which appears outside, so far as one is able to view it, of the normal four-sided shape, is really triangular; and when in the nave one faces west, this peculiarity imparts an adventurous sense of novelty to the church, a delicious and mysterious surprise one could not anticipate, nor even realise, until one had seen.

Individuality is as common in the world as ever it was, and as precious. But its accepted manifestations become ever rarer. What architect to-day would venture to design a triangular-towered church, and what Committee would accept it? No doubt they would all find excellent reasons against such a tower. But those reasons existed five hundred years ago. Yet the men of Maldon built this tower, and it has set for ever the seal of unique charm upon their church.

The heel of Modern Man is struck down very firmly on Individuality, and not in human life only, but also in Nature. Hahn in his summary survey of the North American fauna and flora comes to the conclusion that their aspect is becoming ever tamer and more commonplace, because all the animals and plants that are rare or bizarre or beautiful are being sedulously destroyed by Man's devastating hand. There is nothing we have to fight for more strenuously than Individuality. Unless, indeed, since Man cannot inhabit the earth for ever, the growing dulness of the world may not be a beneficent adaptation to the final extinction, and the last man die content, thankful to leave so dreary and monotonous a scene.

AUGUST 24: A month ago I was wandering through the superb spiritual fortress overlying a primeval pagan sanctuary, which was dreamed twelve centuries ago in the brain of a Bishop of neighbouring Avranches, and

slowly realised by the monastic aspiration, energy, and skill of many generations to dominate the Bay of Saint Michel even now after all the monks have passed away. And to-day I have been wandering in a very different scene around the scanty and charming remains of the Abbey of Beeleigh, along peaceful walks by lovely streams in this most delightful corner of Essex, which the Premonstratensian Canons once captured, in witness of the triumph of religion over the world and the right of the religious to enjoy the best that the world can give.

The Premonstratensian Canons who followed the mild Augustinian rule differed from the Benedictines, and it was not in their genius to seize great rocks and convert them into fortresses. Their attitude was humane, their rule not excessively ascetic; they allowed men and women to exercise the religious life side by side in neighbouring houses; they lived in the country but they were in familiar touch with the world. The White Canons ruled Maldon, but they lived at Beeleigh. They appear to have been admirable priests; the official Visitor (for they were free from Episcopal control) could on one occasion find nothing amiss save that the Canons wore more luxuriant hair than befitted those who bear the chastening sign of the tonsure, and their abbots seem to have been exceptionally wise and prudent. This sweet pastoral scenery, these slow streams with luxuriant banks and pleasant, sheltered walks, were altogether to their taste. Here were their fish-ponds and their mills. Here were all the luxuries of Epicurean austerity. Even in the matter of comfort compare the cramped dungeons, made for defence, in which the would-be lords of the world dwelt, with the spacious democratic palaces, or the finely spaced rural villas, with no need to think of defence, in which men led the religious life. Compare this abbey even with Castle Hedingham a few miles away, once the home of the great De Veres, by no means so gloomy as such castles are wont to be, and I doubt if you

would prefer it to live in; as a matter of fact it has been little used for centuries, while Beeleigh is still a home. Here in these rich and peaceful gardens, Abbot Epicurus of Beeleigh — who held in his hands, at convenient arm's length, the prosperous town of Maldon — could discourse at leisure to his girl disciples — had there been a house of canonesses here — of the lusts and passions that dominate the world, repletion, extravagance, disorders, disease, warfare, and death. In reality Abbot Epicurus had captured all the best things the world can hold and established them at Beeleigh, leaving only the dregs. And at the same time, by a supreme master-stroke of ironic skill, he persuaded those stupid dregs that in spurning them he had renounced the World!

AUGUST 27: Here in the northwest of Suffolk and on into Norfolk there is a fascinating blank in the map. Much of it was in ancient days fenland, with, long before the dawn of history, at least one spot which was a great civilising centre of England, and even maybe of Europe, from the abundance and the quality of the flints here skilfully worked into implements. Now it is simply undulating stretches of heathland, at this season freshly breaking into flower, with many pine trees, and the most invigorating air one can desire. Not a house sometimes for miles, not a soul maybe in sight all day long, not (as we know of old by sad experience and are provided accordingly) a single wayside inn within reach. Only innumerable rabbits who help to dig out the worked flints one may easily find — broken, imperfect, for the most part no doubt discarded — and rare solitary herons, silent and motionless, with long legs and great bills, and unfamiliar flowers, and gorgeous butterflies. Here, on a bank of heather and thyme, we spread our simple and delicious meal.

Do not ask the way to this ancient centre of civilisation, even by its modern and misleading name, even at the nearest cottage. They cannot tell you, and have not so much as heard of it. Yet it may be that those cottagers themselves are of the race of the men who were here once the pioneers of human civilisation, for until lately the people of this isolated region were said to be of different physical type and even of different dress from other people. So it is, as they said of old, that the glory of the world passes away.

AUGUST 29: Whenever, as to-day, I pass through Bury Saint Edmunds or Stowmarket or Sudbury and the neighbourhood, I experience a curious racial home-feeling. I never saw any of these towns or took much interest in them till I had reached middle age. Yet whenever I enter this area I realise that its inhabitants are nearer to me in blood, and doubtless in nervous and psychic tissue, than the people of any other area. It is true that one may feel no special affinity to the members of one's own family group individually. But collectively the affinity cannot fail to be impressive. I am convinced that if a man were to associate with a group of one hundred women (I limit the sex merely because it is in relation to the opposite sex that a man's instinctive and unreasoned sympathies and antipathies are most definite), this group consisting of fifty women who belonged to his own ancestral district, and therefore his own blood, and fifty outside that district, his sympathies would more frequently be evoked by the members of the first group than the second, however indistinguishably they were mingled. That harmonises with the fact that homogamy, as it is called, predominates over heterogamy, that like is attractive to like. Therefore, after all, the feeling I have acquired concerning this part of Suffolk may be in part a matter of instinct.

SEPTEMBER 3: Why is it that notwithstanding my profound admiration for Beethoven, and the delight he frequently gives me, I yet feel so disquieted by that master and so restively hostile to his prevailing temper? I always seem to have a vague feeling that he is a Satan among musicians, a fallen angel in the darkness who is perpetually seeking to fight his way back to happiness, and to enter on the impossible task of taking the Kingdom of Heaven by violence.

Consider the exceedingly popular Fifth Symphony. It seems to me to represent the strenuous efforts of a man who is struggling virtuously with adversity. It is morality rather than art (I would not say the same of the Seventh Symphony, or of the Ninth), and the morality of a proud, self-assertive, rather ill-bred person. I always think of Beethoven as the man who, walking with Goethe at Weimar and meeting the Ducal Court party, turned up his coat collar and elbowed his way through the courtiers, who were all attention to him, while Goethe, scarcely noticed, stood aside bowing, doubtless with an ironic smile at his heart. The Fifth Symphony is a musical rendering of that episode. We feel all through it that self-assertive, self-righteous little man, vigorously thrusting himself through difficulties to the goal of success, and finely advertising his progress over obstacles by that ever-restless drum which is the backbone of the whole symphony. No wonder the Fifth Symphony appeals so much to our virtuous and pushful middle-class audiences. They seem to feel in it the glorification of 'a nation of shopkeepers' who are the happy possessors of a 'Nonconformist Conscience.'

It is another appeal which is made by Bach and Mozart and Schubert. They also may be moved by suffering and sorrow. But they are never in vain rebellion against the Universe. Their sorrow is itself at one with the Universe, and therefore at one with its joy. Such sorrow gives wings to the

soul, it elevates and enlarges us; we are not jarred and crushed by violent attacks on a Fortress of Joy which to such attacks must ever be an unscalable glacis. The Kingdom of Heaven is not taken by violence, and I feel that in the world of music many a smaller man is nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven than this prodigious and lamentable Titan.

SEPTEMBER 9: As I sit basking in the sunshine on this familiar little rocky peninsula in the centre of the bay, still almost surrounded by the falling tide, I note a youth and a girl crossing the sands below me, where the gulls calmly rest, to the edge of dry beach. Then she sits down and he stands or bends tenderly over her. This continues for some time, but the operation thus deliberately carried out, it ultimately becomes clear, is simply that of removing her shoes and stockings. At last it is accomplished, he raises her, swiftly harmonises his costume to hers, and forthwith conducts her through some shallow water to an island of sand. The deeper passage to my peninsula still remains to be forded, and the feat requires some circumspection. In less than half an hour it will be easy to walk across dry-shod, and time is evidently no object. But so prosaic a proceeding is disdained by Paul and Virginia. He wades carefully forward within reach of the rocks, flings boots, white stockings, and other cumbersome belongings on to the lowest ledge of rock, returns to the island, and lifts her up, supporting her body with one arm as she clasps his neck, while with the other he slowly and anxiously feels his way with his stout stick among the big seaweed-grown stones in the surf. I see them clearly now, a serious bespectacled youth of some twenty-one years and a golden-haired girl, some two or three years younger, in a clinging white dress. The young Saint Christopher at last deposits his sacred burden at the foot of the peninsula, which they climb,

to sit down on the rocks, and in the same deliberate, happy, self-absorbed spirit complete their toilet and depart.

I know not what relation of tender intimacy unites them, but when they have gone their faces remain in my memory. I seem to see them thirty years hence, that honest, faithful, straightforward face of the youth, transformed into the rigid image of an eminently worthy and wholly undistinguished citizen, and the radiant, meaningless girl a stout and careful Mrs. Grundy with a band of children around her. Yet the memory of to-day will still perhaps be enshrined in their hearts.

SEPTEMBER 12: 'I study you as I study the Bible,' said a wise and religious old doctor to a patient who had proved a complex and difficult case. His study was of much benefit to her and probably to himself.

It is precisely in this spirit that the psychoanalysts, taught by the genius of Freud, study their patients, devoting an hour a day for weeks or months or more to the gospel before them, seeking to purge themselves of all prepossessions, to lie open to the Divine mystery they are approaching, as the mystic lies open to his Divine mystery, to wait patiently as every page of the physical and spiritual history is turned over, to penetrate slowly to the most remote and intimate secrets of personality, even those that the surface shows no indication of, that have never been uttered or known — until at last the Illumination comes and the Meaning is clear.

How few among the general run of us, medical or lay, have yet learnt to deal thus reverently with Human Beings! Here are these things, Men, Women, and Children, infinitely fascinating and curious in every curve and function of their bodies and souls, with the world set in the heart of each of them, indeed whole Immortalities and Cosmoses, of which one

may sometimes catch glimpses, with amazement if not indeed with amusement, and such a holy awe as Dostoieffsky felt when in moments of revelation he saw by some sudden gleam into the hearts of the criminals around him in Siberia — and what do we do with them? Tie up their souls in official red tape and render their bodies anæmic with clothes, distort them in factories or slay them on battlefields. The doctor is herein the New Mystic at whose feet all must patiently learn the Revelation of Humanity. When there is not quite so much Mankind in the world, and what remains is of better quality, we may perhaps begin to see that a new task lies before Religion, and that all the patient study which men devoted to the Revelation that seemed to them held in the Text of the Bible is but a feeble symbol of the Revelation held in the Text of Men and Women, of whom all the Bibles that ever were merely contain the excretions. It is indeed exactly on that account that we cannot study Bibles too devoutly.

So before each New Person let us ejaculate internally that profound and memorable saying: 'I study you as I study the Bible.'

SEPTEMBER 18: The approach to the comprehension of any original personality, in art or in philosophy, is slow but full of fascination. One's first impulse, I have usually found, is one of tedious indifference, followed by rejection, probably accompanied with repugnance. In this sphere the door which opens at a touch may only lead into a hovel. The portal to a glorious temple may be through a dark and dreary narthex, to be traversed painfully, it may be on one's knees, a passage only illuminated in its last stages by exhilarating bursts of light as the door ahead momentarily swings open.

When Jules de Gaultier sent me on publication his first book *Le Bovarysme*, I glanced through it with but a faint in-

terest and threw it aside. (I had done the same some years before, perhaps as stupidly, who knows? with the *Matière et Mémoire* of the rival philosopher who has since become so magnificently prosperous in the world.) The awkward and ill-chosen title offended me, as it offends me still, and Gaultier had then scarcely attained the full personal charm of his grave, subdued, and reticent style. But another book arrived from the same author, and yet another, and I began to feel the attraction of this new thinker and to grasp slowly his daring and elusive conception of the world. Here, one remarks, is where the stupid people who are slow of understanding have their compensation in the end. For whereas the brilliant person sees so much light at his first effort that he is apt to be content with it, the other is never content, but is always groping after more, perhaps to come nearer to the Great Light at last.

For Gaultier the world is a spectacle. We always conceive ourselves other than we are (that is the famous 'Bovarism'), we can never know the world as it is. The divine creative principle is Error. All the great dramatists and novelists have unconsciously realised this in the sphere of literature; Flaubert consciously and supremely realised it. In life also the same principle holds. Life is a perpetual risk and danger, the perpetual toss of a die which can never be calculated, a perpetual challenge to high adventure. But it is only in Art that the solution of Life's problems can be found. Life is always immoral and unjust. It is Art alone which, rising above the categories of Morality, justifies the pains and griefs of Life by demonstrating their representative character and emphasising their spectacular value, thus redeeming the Pain of Life by Beauty.

It is along this path that Jules de Gaultier would lead by the hand those tender and courageous souls who care to follow him.

SEPTEMBER 19: Imbecility is the Enemy, and there are two tragic shapes of Imbecility which one meets so often, and finds so disheartening, perhaps not indeed hopeless, not beyond the power even of Training, to say nothing of Breeding, to better.

There is that form of Imbecility which shows itself in the inability to see any person or any thing save in a halo of the debased effluvium which the imbecile creature himself exudes, and in the firm conviction — that is where the Imbecility comes in — that the halo pertains not to himself but to the object he gazes at. Law, necessary as it is, powerfully aids these manifestations, and the Policeman is the accepted representative of this form of Imbecility. It is a sad form, not only because it is so common, and so powerfully supported, but because it effectually destroys the finest blossoms of human aspiration on the pathway to any more beautiful life. It is the guardian against us of the Gate of Paradise. If the inspired genius who wrote the delightful Book of Genesis were among us to-day, instead of two cherubim with flaming swords, he would probably have placed at the door of his Eden two policemen with truncheons. Nothing can be lovelier, more true to the spiritual fact, than the account in the Gospel of the angel Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary; it represents the experience of innumerable women in all ages, and on that account it has received sanctification for ever. It was an incident described by a saint who was also a poet. But imagine that incident described by a policeman, and one shudders. So long as the policeman's special form of Imbecility triumphs in the world, there will be no Paradise Regained.

But there is another shape in which Imbecility is revealed, scarcely less fatal though it is of the reverse kind. It is the Imbecility of those young things who, themselves radiating innocence and fragrance, instinctively cast a garment of their own making round every object that attracts them, however

foul, and never see it for what it is, until too late, and then, with their illusion, their own innocence and fragrance have also gone. For this kind of Imbecility erects a fortress for the Evil in the world it could by a glance strike dead.

In the one case, as in the other, it is Intelligence which is at fault, the enlightened brain, the calm and discerning eye that can see things for what they are, neither debasing nor exalting them. The clear-sighted eye in front of the enlightened brain — there can be no Imbecility then. Only the Diseases of the Soul which Reason can never cure.

From these two shapes of Imbecility one would like to see a delivering Saviour arise.

SEPTEMBER 24: The act of bathing in the sea, rightly considered, is a sacred act, and is so recognised in many parts of the world. It should not be made as commonplace as a mere hygienic tubbing, nor be carried out by a crowd of clothed persons in muddy water. No profane unfriendly eye should be near, the sun must be bright, the air soft, the green transparent sea should ripple smoothly over the rocks, as I see it below me now, welling rhythmically into rock-basins and plashing out with a charge of bubbling air and a delicious murmur of satisfied physiological relief. Enter the sea in such a manner, on such a day, and the well-tempered water greets the flesh so lovingly that it opens like a flower with no contraction of hostile resistance. The discomforting sensation of the salt in the nostrils becomes a delightful and invigorating fragrance as it blends with the exhilaration of this experience. So to bathe is more than to bathe. It is a rite of which the physical delight is a symbol of the spiritual significance of an act of Communion with Nature, to be stored up with one's best experiences of Fine Living.

SEPTEMBER 27: It is a soft, wet Cornish day, and as I sit in the garden, sheltered from the rain, there floats back to memory a day, two months ago at Ripoll, when I wandered in the wonderful and beautiful cloisters, where every capital is an individual object of fascinating study, still fresh after so many centuries, and not a footstep ever disturbed my peace.

Nothing so well evidences the fine utility of monasticism as the invention of the cloister. In a sense it was the centre of monastic life, so that monastery and cloister are almost synonymous terms. No peasant-born monk of the West, in the carol of his cloister, had occasion to envy the King of Granada his Court of the Lions. Fresh air, the possibility of movement, sunshine in winter and shade in summer, the vision of flowers, the haunting beauty of the well in the centre, and the exhilarating spring of the arches all around, the *armaria* of books at hand, and silence — such things as these are for every man who thinks and writes the essentials of intellectual living. And every cloister offered them. Literature has smelt unpleasantly of the lamp since cloisters were no longer built, and men born for the cloister, the Rousseaus and the Wordsworths and the Nietzsches, wandered homelessly among the hills, while to-day we seek any feeble substitute for the cloister wherein to work at leisure in the free air of Nature, and hear the song of the birds and the plash of the rain at one's feet.

SEPTEMBER 30: When I pass through the little Cornish valley there is one tree on which my eye always dwells. It is of no greater size than many other trees in the valley, nor even, it may be to a casual glance, of any marked peculiarity; one might say, indeed, that in this alien environment, so far from its home on the other side of the world, it

manifests a certain unfamiliar shyness, or a well-bred condescension to the conventions of the English floral world. Yet, such as it is, that tree calls up endless pictures from the recesses of memory, of the beautiful sun-suffused land where the Eucalyptus in all its wonderful varieties, vast and insolent and solemn and fantastic, is lord of the floral land, and the Mimosa, with the bewitching loveliness that aches for ever at one's heart, is the lady of the land.

So I walk along the Cornish valley in a dream, and once more kangaroos bound in slow, great curves down the hills, and gay parrakeets squabble on the ground, and the soft grey apple-gums slumber in the distance, and the fragrance of the wattles is wafted in the air.

OCTOBER 2: If this Cornish day were always and everywhere October, then October would never be a month to breed melancholy in the heart, and I could enter into the rapture of De Régnier over this season of the year. It would, indeed, be pleasant to think of October as a month when, as to-day, the faint northeasterly wind is mysteriously languorous, and the sun burns hot even through misty clouds, and the dim sea has all the soft plash of summer, and from the throats of birds comes now and again a liquid and idle note which, they themselves seem to feel, has no function but the delight of mere languid contentment, and the fuchsia tree casts a pool of crimson blossoms on the ground while yet retaining amid its deep metallic greenery a rich burden of exotic bells, to last maybe to Christmas. If this is indeed October as Nature made October, then we might always approach Winter in the same mood as, if we are wise, we shall always approach Death.

OCTOBER 6: The Russian philosopher Schestoff points out that while we have to be reticent regarding the weaknesses of ordinary men, we can approach the great with open eyes and need never fear to give their qualities the right names. 'How simply and quietly the Gospel reports that in one night the Apostle Peter denied his Master thrice! And yet that has not hindered mankind from building him a magnificent temple in Rome, where untold millions have reverently kissed the feet of his statue, and even to-day his representative is counted infallible.'

It is a pregnant observation that we might well bear in mind when we concern ourselves with the nature and significance of genius. I know little about St. Peter's claim to genius. But at least he is here an admirable symbol. That is how genius is made, and, it is interesting to note, how the popular mind realises that genius is made; for the creators of the Gospels, who have clearly omitted or softened so much, have yet emphatically set forth the bald record of the abject moral failure in the moment of decisive trial of the inappropriately named Rock on which Christ built His Church. And Peter's reputation and authority remain supreme to this day.

James Hinton was wont to dwell on the weakness of genius, as of a point of least resistance in human nature, an opening through which the force of Nature might enter the human world. 'Where there is nothing there is God,' and it may be that this weakness is no accident but an essential fact in the very structure of genius. Weakness may be as necessary to the man of genius as it is unnecessary to the normal man.

Our biographers of genius are usually futile enough on all grounds, even in the record of the simplest biological data, as in my own work I have had sad occasion to experience. But at no point are they so futile as in toning down, glozing over, or altogether ignoring all those immoralities, weak-

nesses, defects, and failures which perhaps are the very Hall-mark of Genius. They all want their Peters to look like real rocks. And on such rocks no churches are built.

OCTOBER 13: I wish that people would be a little more cautious in the use of the word 'Perfection.' Or else that they would take the trouble to find out what they mean by it. One grows tired of endless chatter concerning the march of Progress towards Perfection, and of the assumption underlying it that Perfection — as usually defined — is a quality which any one need desire in anything.

If Perfection is that which is most beautiful and desirable to us, then it is something of which an essential part is Imperfection.

That is clearly so in relation to physical beauty. A person who is without demonstrable defect of beauty — some exaggeration of proportion, some visible flaw — leaves us cold and indifferent. The flaw or the defect may need to be of some special kind or quality to touch us individually, but still it is needed. The absence of flaw in beauty is itself a flaw. As I write my eye falls on a plate of tomatoes. The tense and smoothly curved red fruits with their wayward green stalks lie at random on a blue dish of ancient pattern. They are beautiful. Yet each fruit has conspicuously on it a fleck of reflected light. Looked at in itself, each fleck is ugly, a greyish patch which effaces the colour it rests on. Yet the brilliant beauty of these fruits is largely dependent on those flecks of light. So it is with some little mole on the body of a beautiful woman, or a mutinous irregularity in the curve of her mouth, or some freak in the distribution of her hair.

There are some people willing to admit that Perfection is a useless conception in relation to physical beauty, and yet

unwilling to believe that it is equally useless in the moral sphere. Yet in the moral world also Imperfection is essential to beauty and desire. What we are pleased to consider Perfection of character is perhaps easier to attain than Perfection of body. But, not on that account alone, it is equally unattractive. The woman who seems a combination of unalloyed virtues is as inadequate as the woman who is a combination of smooth physical perfections. In the moral world, indeed, the desired Imperfection needs to be dynamic and shifting rather than static and fixed, because virtues are contradictory. Modesty and Courage, for instance, do not sort well together at the same moment. Men have rhapsodized much on the modesty of woman, but a woman who was always modest would be as insipid as a woman who was always courageous would be repellent. An incalculable and dynamic combination of Shyness and Daring is at the core of a woman's fascination. And the same relationship binds the more masculine combination of Justice and Generosity.

Why should we pretend any more that the world is on the road to Perfection? Or that we want it to be? The world is in perpetual oscillation. Let us be thankful for every inspiring revelation of a New Imperfection.

OCTOBER 23: There has been much discussion over Flaubert's views of the artist's attitude towards his own work — how far the artist stands outside his own work, and how far he is himself the stuff of his work — and I see that Mr. Newbolt has been grappling again with that same problem. Yet surely it is hardly a problem. Flaubert, we are told, contradicted himself in those volumes of *Correspondance* which have seemed to some (indeed what has Flaubert written that has not seemed to some?) the most fascinating and profoundly interesting part of his work. The

artist must be impersonal, he insisted, and yet Saint Anthony is Flaubert, and he himself said, 'Madame Bovary, c'est moi.' He contradicted himself. Well, what then? 'Do I contradict myself?' he might have asked with Whitman. 'Very well, then, I contradict myself.' The greatest of literary artists, we may rest assured, had the clearest vision of the haven for which he was sailing. But he was bound for a port which few mariners have ever come near, and he knew that the wind was ever in his teeth. It was only by taking a course that was a constant series of zigzags, it was only by perpetually tacking, that he could ever hope to come into harbour. He was not, therefore, the less acutely aware of his precise course. He was merely adopting the most strictly scientific method of navigation. The fluctuating judgments which Flaubert seems to pronounce on the aim of the artist all represent sound approximations to a complete truth which no formula will hold. No sailor on this sea ever sailed more triumphantly into port. That seems to settle the matter.

OCTOBER 24: At the crowded concert this evening I found a seat at the back of the orchestra, and when a singer came on to sing the 'Agnus Dei' of Bach's Mass in B Minor I had the full view of her back, her dress, cut broad and low, fully showing her shoulder-blades. I thus saw that, though the movements of her arms were slight, yet as she sang the long drawn-out sighs, rising and falling, of the 'Miserere,' the subdued loveliness of the music was accompanied by an unceasing play of the deltoid and trapezius muscles. It was a perpetual dance of all the visible muscles, in swelling and sinking curves, opening out and closing in, rising and falling and swaying, a beautifully expressive rhythm in embodiment of the melody.

One sees how it was that the Greeks, for whom the whole

body was an ever-open book, could so train their vision to its vivid music (has not Taine indeed said something to this effect in his travel notes in Southern Italy?) that when they came to carve reliefs for their Parthenon, even to represent the body in seeming repose, they instinctively knew how to show it sensitive, alive, as in truth it is, redeemed from grossness by the exquisite delicacy of its mechanism at every point. People think that the so-called *danse du ventre* is an unnatural distortion, and in its customary exaggerations so it is. But it is merely the high-trained and undue emphasis of beautiful natural expression. Rightly considered, the whole body is a dance. It is for ever in instinctive harmonious movement, at every point exalted to unstained beauty, because at every moment it is the outcome of vital expression that springs from its core and is related to the meaning of the whole. In our blind folly we have hidden the body. We have denied its purity. We have ignored its vital significance. We pay the bitter penalty. And I detect a new meaning in the wail of that 'Miserere.'

OCTOBER 29: I am interested to hear that the latest theorists of harmony in music are abandoning the notion that they must guide practice, or that music is good or bad according as it follows, or fails to follow, theoretical laws. One recalls how Beethoven in his lifetime was condemned by the theorists, and how almost apologetically he himself referred at the end to his own deliberate breaking of the rules. But now, it appears, the musical theorists are beginning to realise that theory must be based on practice and not practice on theory. The artist takes precedence of the theorist, who learns his theories from observation of the artist, and when in his turn he teaches, the artist is apt to prove dangerous. 'In matters of art,' says Lenormand in his

recent book on harmony, 'it is dangerous to learn to do as others do.'

Now this interests me because it is in this spirit that I have always contemplated the art of writing. This must be our attitude before the so-called rules of grammar and syntax. Certainly one cannot be too familiar with the rules, they cannot even be wisely broken unless they are known, and we cannot be too familiar with the practice of those who have gone before us. But the logic of thought takes precedence of the rules of grammar, and syntax must ever be moulded afresh on the sensibility of the individual writer. Only in so far as a man writes in this temper — the resolute temper, as Thoreau said, of a man who is grasping an axe or a sword — can he achieve the daring and the skill by which writing lives. To be clear, to be exact, to be expressive, and so to be beautiful — that is the writer's proper aim. The rules are good so far — but only so far — as they help him to sail on the voyage towards his desired haven. Let him sail warily, and if he miscalculates let him suffer shipwreck.

That is the really inviolable law of all the arts. How long will it be before we understand that it is also the law of morality, the greatest art of all, the Art of Living?

NOVEMBER 5: Surely an uncomfortable feeling must overcome many excellent people when they realise — if that ever happens — the contrast between their view of the world and that which prevailed in the ages most apt for great achievement and abounding vitality. In the moral world of to-day such didactic energy as men possess is concentrated into one long litany of Thou Shalt Not.

May it be because the Tradesman has inherited the earth and stocked Morality on his shelves? That he stocks no line of moral goods to which the yard-measure cannot be applied?

The Saints as well as the Sinners must go empty away in a social state whose lordship has fallen to Hogarth's Good Apprentice.

But that is not how Life is. In the moral world — so far as it is a world of great achievement — the tape-measure is out of place. It is only the Immeasurable that counts. And Life is not only Immeasurable but magnificently inconsistent, even incomprehensible, to those who have not the clue to its Divine Maze.

Think of the thirteenth century, the fourteenth, the fifteenth, the sixteenth, and all that they achieved for humanity, and consider in what surviving recesses of them you would find a place for the Moralists of the Counter, who in their eagerness to open up new markets would cut the cloth of the moral life not merely for themselves — that would matter to nobody — but for mankind at large. There would have been no room for them in the monasteries where, on first thought, we might be inclined to hide them, notwithstanding the exaggerated love of rule which marked the monastic mind, for that rule was itself based on a magnificent extravagance, heroic even when it was not natural. There would have been still less room for them in the churches, where the priests themselves joined in the revels of the Feast of Fools, and the builders delighted to honour God by carving on their temples, inside and outside, the images of wildest licence, as we may still see here and there to-day. And as for the ages of Humanism and the Renaissance, our moralists would have been submerged in laughter. Look even at Boccaccio, a very grave scholar, and see how in his stories of human life he serenely wove all that men thought belonged to Heaven and all that they thought belonged to Hell into a single variegated and harmonious picture.

Since then a strange blindness has struck men in the world we were born into. There has been a Goethe, no doubt, a

Wilhelm von Humboldt, a Whitman. Men have scarcely noted them. Perhaps the responsibility in part lies at the door of Protestantism. Unamuno remarks that Catholicism knew little of that anxious preoccupation with sin, so destructive of heroic greatness, which has gnawed at the vitals of the Protestantism which we have inherited, if only in the form of a barren Freethought spreading its influence far beyond Protestant lands.

Is this a clue to our Intellectual Anæmia and Spiritual Starvation?

NOVEMBER 8: In a letter of Saint Bernard — the ardent theologian, the relentless fanatic, the austere critic of the world and the flesh — to his friend Rainald, the Abbot of Foigny, I come with surprised delight on a quotation from 'your favourite' — and it almost seems as though the Saint had narrowly escaped writing 'our favourite' — 'your favourite Ovid.' So the Abbot of Foigny, amid the vexations and tribulations he felt so bitterly, was wont to pore in his cell over the pages of Ovid.

The pages of Ovid, as one glances across them, are like a gay southern meadow in June, variegated and brilliant, sweet and pensive and rather luxuriant, and here and there even a little rank. Yet they are swept by the air and the light and the rain of Nature, and so their seduction never grew stale. During sixteen centuries, while the world was spiritually revolutionised again and yet again, the influence of Ovid never failed; it entered even the unlikeliest places. Homer might be an obscure forgotten bard and Virgil become a fantastic magician, but Ovid, lifted beyond the measure of his genius, was for ever a gracious and exalted Influence, yet human enough to be beloved and with the pathos of exile clinging to his memory, filling the dreams of fainting monks

at the feet of the Virgin, arousing the veneration of the Humanists, even inspiring the superb and exuberant poets of the English Renaissance, Marlowe and Shakespeare and Milton.

It has sometimes seemed to me that if it were given to the ghosts of the Great Dead to follow with sensitive eyes the life after life of their fame on earth, there would be none, not even the greatest — to whom indeed the vision could often bring only bitterness — to find more reasonable ground for prolonged bliss than Ovid.

NOVEMBER 13: I find myself unable to share that Pessimism in the face of the world which seems not uncommon to-day. I suspect that the Pessimist is often merely an impecunious bankrupt Optimist. He had imagined, in other words, that the eminently respectable March of Progress was bearing him onwards to the social goal of a glorified Sunday School. Horrible doubts have seized him. Henceforth, to his eyes, the Universe is shrouded in Black.

His mistake has doubtless been to emphasise unduly the notion of Progress, to imagine that any cosmic advance, if such there be, could ever be made actual to our human eyes. There was a failure to realise that the everlasting process of Evolution which had obsessed men's minds is counterbalanced by an equally everlasting process of Involution. There is no Gain in the world: so be it: but neither is there any Loss. There is never any failure to this infinite freshness of life, and the ancient novelty is for ever renewed.

We realise the world better if we imagine it, not as a Progress to Prim Perfection, but as the sustained upleaping of a Fountain, the pillar of a Glorious Flame. For, after all, we cannot go beyond the ancient image of Heraclitus, the

'Ever-living Flame, kindled in due measure and in the like measure extinguished.' That translucent and mysterious Flame shines undyingly before our eyes, never for two moments the same, and always miraculously incalculable, an ever-flowing stream of fire. The world is moving, men tell us, to this, to that, to the other. Do not believe them! Men have never known what the world is moving to. Who foresaw — to say nothing of older and vaster events — the Crucifixion? What Greek or Roman in his most fantastic moments prefigured our thirteenth century? What Christian foresaw the Renaissance? Who ever really expected the French Revolution? We cannot be too bold, for we are ever at the incipient point of some new manifestation far more overwhelming than all our dreams. No one can foresee the next aspect of the Fountain of Life. And all the time the Pillar of that Flame is burning at exactly the same height it has always been burning at!

The World is everlasting Novelty, everlasting Monotony. It is just which aspect you prefer. You will always be right.

NOVEMBER 14: 'Life is a great bundle of little things.' It is very many years since I read that saying of Oliver Wendell Holmes, but there is no saying I oftener have occasion to repeat to myself. There is the whole universe to dream over, and one's life is spent in the perpetual doing of an infinite series of little things. It is a hard task, if one loses the sense of the significance of little things, the little loose variegated threads which are yet the stuff of which our picture of the universe is woven.

I admire the wisdom of our ancestors who seem to have spent so much of their time in weaving beautiful tapestries to hang on the walls of their rooms, even though, it seems, they were not always careful that there should be no rats

behind the arras. So to live was to have always before one the visible symbol of life, where every little variegated tag has a meaning that goes to the heart of the universe. For each of these insignificant little things of life stretches far beyond itself — like a certain Impromptu of Schubert's, which begins as though it might be a cradle song in a nursery and ends like the music of the starry sphere which carries the world on its course.

NOVEMBER 17: It has long been a little puzzling to me that my feeling in regard to the apple and the pear, and their respective symbolisms, is utterly at variance with tradition and folklore. To the primitive mind the apple was feminine and the symbol of all feminine things, while the pear was masculine. To me it is rather the apple that is masculine, while the pear is extravagantly and deliciously feminine. In its exquisitely golden-toned skin, which yet is of such firm texture, in the melting sweetness of its flesh, in its vaguely penetrating fragrance, in its subtle and ravishing and various curves, even, if you will, in the tantalising uncertainty as to the state of its heart, the pear is surely a fruit perfectly endowed with the qualities which fit it to be regarded as conventionally a feminine symbol. In the apple, on the other hand, I can see all sorts of qualities which should better befit a masculine symbol. But it was not so to the primitive mind.

I see now how the apparent clash has come about. It appears that Albertus Magnus in the thirteenth century, accepting the ancient and orthodox view of his time, remarked that the pear is rightly considered masculine because of the hardness of its wood, the coarseness of its leaves, and the close texture of its fruit. Evidently our pear has been developed away from the mediæval pear, while the apple has

remained comparatively stable. The careful cultivation of the apple began at an early period in history; an orchard in mediæval days meant an apple orchard. (One recalls that, in the fourth century, the pear-tree the youthful Saint Augustine robbed was not in an orchard, and the fruit was 'tempting neither for colour nor taste,' though, certainly, he says he had better at home.) The apple for the men of those days was the sweetest and loveliest of the larger fruits they knew; it naturally seemed to them the symbol of woman. Here to-day are some pears of the primitive sort they sell in the Cornish village street, small round fruits, dark green touched with brown in colour, without fragrance, extremely hard, though as ripe as they ever will be. This clearly is what Albertus Magnus meant by a pear, and one can quite understand that he saw nothing femininely symbolic about it. As soon as the modern pear began to be developed the popular mind at once seized on its feminine analogies ('Cuisse-Madame,' for instance, is the name of one variety), and as a matter of fact all the modern associations of the fruit are feminine. They seem first to be traceable about the sixteenth century, and it was only then, I imagine, that the pear began to be seriously cultivated. So the seeming conflict is harmonised.

The human mind always reasons and analogises correctly from the data before it. Only because the data have changed, only because the data were imperfect, can the reasoning seem to be astray. There is really nothing so primitive, even so animal, as reason. It may plausibly, however unsoundly, be maintained that it is by his emotions, not by his reason, that man differs most from the beasts. 'My cat,' says Unamuno, who takes this view in his new book *Del sentimiento tragico de la vida*, 'never laughs or cries; he is always reasoning.'

NOVEMBER 22: I note that a fine scholar remarks with a smile that the direct simplicity of the Greeks hardly suits our modern taste for obscurity.

Yet there is obscurity and obscurity. There is, that is to say, the obscurity that is an accidental result of depth and the obscurity that is a fundamental result of confusion. Swinburne once had occasion to compare the obscurity of Chapman with the obscurity of Browning. The difference was, he said, that Chapman's obscurity was that of smoke and Browning's that of lightning. One may surely add that smoke is often more beautiful than lightning (Swinburne himself admitted Chapman's 'flashes of high and subtle beauty'), and that lightning is to our eyes by no means more intelligible than smoke. If indeed one wished to risk such facile generalisations, one might say that the difference between Chapman's obscurity and Browning's is that the one is more often beautiful and the other more often ugly. If one looks into the matter a little more closely, it would seem that Chapman was a man whose splendid emotions were apt to flare up so excessively and swiftly that their smoke was not all converted into flame, while Browning was a man whose radically prim and conventional ideas, heavily overladen with emotion, acquired the semblance of profundity because they struggled into expression through the medium of a congenital stutter — a stutter which was no doubt one of the great assets of his fame. But neither Chapman's obscurity nor Browning's obscurity seems to be intrinsically admirable. There was too much pedantry in both of them and too little artistry. It is the function of genius to express the Inexpressed, even to express what men have accounted the Inexpressible. And so far as the function of genius is concerned, that man merely cumber the ground who fails to express. For we can all do that. And whether we do it in modest privacy or in ten thousand published pages is beside the point.

Yet, on the other hand, a superlative clearness is not necessarily admirable. To see truly, according to the fine saying of Renan, is to see dimly. If art is expression, mere clarity is nothing. The extreme clarity of an artist may be due not to his marvellous power of illuminating the abysses of his soul, but merely to the fact that there are no abysses to illuminate. It is at best but that core of Nothingness which needs to be enclosed in order to make either Beauty or Depth. The maximum of Clarity must be consistent with the maximum of Beauty. The impression we receive on first entering the presence of any supreme work of art is obscurity. But it is an obscurity like that of a Catalonian Cathedral which slowly grows luminous as one gazes, until the solid structure beneath is revealed. The veil of its Depth grows first transparent on the form of Art before our eyes, and then the veil of its Beauty, and at last there is only its Clarity. So it comes before us like the Eastern dancer who slowly unwinds the shimmering veil that floats around her as she dances, and for one flashing supreme moment of the dance bears no veil at all. But without the veil there would be no dance.

Be clear. Be clear. Be not too clear.

NOVEMBER 23: I see that Milton's attitude to the astronomy of his time, a subject on which Dr. Orchard wrote an elaborate study many years ago, is once more under discussion.

There is perhaps some interest in comparing Milton's attitude in this matter to that of his daring and brilliant contemporary, Cyrano de Bergerac. In reading the Preface which Lebreton wrote somewhere about 1656 for his friend Cyrano's *Voyage dans la Lune*, written some years earlier, I note the remark that most astronomers had then adopted the Copernican system (without offence, as he is careful to add, to

the memory of Ptolemy) and Bergerac had introduced it into literature; it certainly suited his genius and his purpose. As we know, Milton — who had once met the blind Galileo and always venerated his memory — viewed Copernican astronomy with evident sympathy, even in *Paradise Lost* itself dismissing the Ptolemaic cosmogony with contempt. Yet it is precisely on the basis of that discredited cosmogony that the whole structure of *Paradise Lost* is built. Hence a source of worry to the modern critic who is disposed to conclude that Milton chose the worse way in place of the better out of timidity or deference to the crowd, though Milton's attitude towards marriage and divorce might alone serve to shield him from any charge of intellectual cowardice, and the conditions under which *Paradise Lost* was written could scarcely invite any appeal to the mob. This seems to me a perverse attitude which entirely overlooks the essential point of the case. Milton was an artist.

If Milton, having abandoned his earlier Arthurian scheme, and chosen in preference these antique Biblical protagonists, had therewith placed them on the contemporary cosmogonic stage of the Renaissance he would have perpetrated, as he must have felt, a hideous incongruity of geocentric and heliocentric conceptions, and set himself a task which could only work out absurdly. His stage was as necessary to his drama as Dante's complicated stage was necessary to his drama. We must not here recall the ancient observation about 'pouring new wine into old bottles.' That metaphor is excellent when we are talking of morals, and it was in the sphere of morals it was meant to apply. But in the sphere of literary art it is the reverse of the truth, as the poets of Vers Libres have sometimes found to their cost. It was probably a very old bottle into which Homer poured his new wine, and it was certainly a skin of the oldest at hand which Cervantes chose for his *Quixote*.

In his attitude towards science Milton thus represents the artist's true instinct. Science, mere concordance with the latest doctrine of the moment, is nothing to the artist except in so far as it serves his ends. It is just as likely to be a hindrance as a help, and Tennyson, however true an artist, profited nothing by dragging into his verse a few scraps of the latest astronomy. Art is in its sphere as supreme over fact as Science in its sphere is supreme over fiction. The artist may play either fast or loose with Science, and the finest artist will sometimes play loose.

NOVEMBER 24: The more one ponders over that attitude of comprehensive acceptance towards life, on its spiritual and physical sides alike, which marked the men of the Mediæval and Renaissance Ages, the more one realises that its temporary suppression was inevitable. The men of those days were, one sees, themselves creating the instrument (what a marvellous intellectual instrument Scholasticism forged!) which was to analyse and destroy the civilisation they themselves lived in. Their fluid civilisation held all the elements of life in active vital solution. They left hard, definite, clear-cut crystals for us to deal with, separate, immiscible, inharmonious substances. It was Progress, no doubt, as Progress exists in our world. The men of those days were nearer to Barbarism. They were also nearer to the Secret of Nature. Nowadays it is only among men of genius — a Whitman, a Wagner, a Rodin, a Verlaine — that the ancient secret has survived. Not indeed that it was universal even among Renaissance men, not even when they were men of genius. If it is true that, under the influence of Savonarola, Botticelli burnt his drawings, he was false to the spirit of his age, touched by the spirit of Progress before its time. Verlaine was nearer to the great secret when he wrote *Sagesse* and, at the same time, *Parallèlement*.

When Lady Lugard was travelling in the Pacific she met a young Polynesian of high birth who gravely told her, when asked about his proposed career in life, that he had not yet decided whether to enter the Church or to join a Circus. He was still sufficiently near to the large and beautiful life of his forefathers to feel instinctively that there is no contradiction between an athletic body and an athletic soul, that we may enter into communion with Nature along the one road or the other road. He knew that the union of these two avocations — which to our narrow eyes seem incompatible — was needed to fulfil his ideal of complete and wholesome human activity. That young Polynesian chief had in him the secret to regenerate a world which has only a self-complacent smile for his faith.

It was evidently the great development of the geometrical, mathematical, and allied sciences in the seventeenth century which completed the submergence of the Mediæval and Renaissance attitude towards morals. There was no room for a biological conception of life in the seventeenth century, unless it were among the maligned Jesuits. The morbid and mathematical Pascal claimed to be an authority in morals. The Crystal had superseded Life.

So it came about that Logic was introduced as the guide of morals; Logic, which the Greeks regarded as an exercise for schoolboys; Logic, which in Flaubert's *Tentation* is the leader of the chorus of the Seven Deadly Sins! That surprising touch of Flaubert's seems, indeed, a fine example of the profound and apparently incalculable insight of genius. Who would have thought to find in the visions of Saint Anthony a clue to the disease of our modern morality? Yet when the fact is before us there is nothing plainer than the fatal analytic action of logic on the moral life. It is only when the white light of life is broken up that the wild extravagance of colour appears. It is only when the harmonious balance of the moral life is overturned that the Deadly Sins, which in their due co-ordination

are woven into the whole texture of life, become truly damnable. Life says for ever: 'Do I contradict myself? Very well, then, I contradict myself.' And to such Morality Logic is fatally subversive. There can be no large and harmonious and natural Morality when Logic is made to stand where it ought not.

Sooner or later the whirligig of time brings its revenges. We return to the former age, on another plane, purged of its tyranny and of its cruelty, it may well be, and with all sorts of new imperfections to console us for the old imperfections we are forced to abandon.

One more turn of the Earthly Kaleidoscope. Who knows what it may bring?

NOVEMBER 25: In a novel by a distinguished writer, Madame Delarue-Mardrus, I notice a casual reference to 'the English love of flowers.' I am a little surprised to find this stated as a specifically English characteristic. It seems more obvious to regard the love of animals as peculiarly English, as it is regarded by the Freudian physician, Maeder, who believes that the love of animals is the lightning-rod along which the dangerously repressed emotions of the English are conducted to earth through harmless channels. It is in Spain that flowers seem to me more tenderly regarded by the people than anywhere, the cherished companions of daily life, carefully cultivated on every poorest balcony. Certainly in Paris one sees very conspicuously the absence of the love of flowers; or, rather, one may say that for the subtle and inventive children of the Île de France the flower is artificial, and what we call flowers are merely an insipid and subordinate variety, 'natural flowers,' having their market in a remote and deserted corner of the city, whereas in Barcelona the busiest and central part of the city is the *Rambla de las Flores*.

The factors involved may well be two, one climatic, one racial: a climate favourable or unfavourable to horticulture and a popular feeling attracted or repelled by Nature. Both these factors may work in the same direction in the Parisian love of artificial flowers and the Catalan love of natural flowers, while in the parched land of Andalusia one factor alone seems to keep alive the adoration of flowers. Lucie Delarue-Mardrus belongs to Normandy, and perhaps the Norman traditions have been a little modified by the dominant influence of the neighbouring Île de France. Along this mild and luxuriant Atlantic seaboard of France, so favourable to flowers, from the Pyrenees northwards, there seems to me no intrinsic defect in the love of flowers, which are everywhere cultivated and familiarly regarded. I have noted, for instance, how constantly the hydrangea plant appears. In churches for weddings in profusion, in Bordeaux, for example, and in rooms, on the tables, again and again I have noted the fine taste which selected for special reverence the hydrangea — that Chinese flower whose penetrating loveliness is miraculously made out of forms so simple and colour so effaced.

NOVEMBER 26: Kraepelin, one of the wisest and most far-sighted physicians of to-day where the interpretation of insanity is concerned, believes that Civilisation is just now favouring Degeneration. He attributes an especially evil influence on mental health to our modern tendency to limit freedom: the piling-up of burdens of all sorts, within and without, on the exercise of the will.

This well accords with what I have noted concerning the necessity in any age of creating New Freedoms and New Restraints. New Restraints by all means, they are necessary and vital. But just as necessary, just as vital, are the compensatory New Freedoms.

We cannot count too precious in any age those who sweep away outworn traditions, effete routines, the burden of unnecessary duties and superfluous luxuries and useless moralities, too heavy to be borne. We rebel against these rebels, even shudder at their sacrilegious daring. But, after all, they are a part of life, an absolutely necessary part of it. For life is a breaking-down as well as a building-up. Destruction as well as construction goes to the Metabolism of Society.

NOVEMBER 27: It seems to me a weakness of the Peace Propaganda of our time — though a weakness which represents an inevitable reaction from an ancient superstition — that it tends to be under the dominance of Namby Pamby. The people who crowd Peace Congresses to demonstrate against war seem largely people who have little perception of the eternal function of Pain in the world and no insight into the right uses of Death.

Apart from the intolerable burden of armaments it imposes, and the flagrant disregard of Justice it involves, the crushing objection to War, from the standpoint of Humanity and Society, is not that it distributes Pain and inflicts Death, but that it distributes and inflicts them on an absurdly wholesale scale and on the wrong people. So that it is awry to all the ends of reasonable civilisation. Occasionally, no doubt, it may kill off the people who ought to be killed, but that is only by accident, for by its very organisation it is more likely to kill the people who ought not to be killed. Occasionally and incidentally, also, it may promote Heroism, but its heroes merely exterminate each other for the benefit of people who are not heroes. In the recent Balkan wars we see that the combatant States all diligently and ferociously maimed each other, very little to their own advantage and very much to the aggrandisement of the one State within their borders which never fired a gun and

never lost a man. If Peace Societies possessed a little intelligence they would surely issue a faithful history of this war for free distribution among all the modern States of the world. That is what War is.

Explorers in Southern Nigeria, I see, have just reported the discovery of remote Sacred Places consecrated to native worship. Here were found the Lake of Life and the Pool of Death. Here, also, from time to time human sacrifices are offered. This ritual the worthy explorers self-complacently describe as 'blood-thirsty.'

But how about us? The men of Southern Nigeria, seriously, deliberately, with a more or less unconscious insight into the secrets of Nature, offer up human sacrifices on their altars, and when some ignorant European intrudes and calls them 'blood-thirsty' we all meekly acquiesce. In Europe we kill and maim people by the hundred thousand, not seriously and deliberately for any sacred ends that make Life more precious to us or the Mystery of Nature more intelligible, but out of sheer stupidity. We spend the half, and sometimes more than the half, of our national incomes in sharpening to the finest point our implements of bloodshed, not to the accompaniment of any Bacchic Evoe, but incongruously mumbling the Sermon on the Mount. We put our population into factories which squeeze the blood out of their anæmic and diseased bodies, and we permit the most extravagant variations in the infantile death-rate which the slightest social readjustment would smooth out. We do all this consciously, in full statistical knowledge to a decimal fraction.

Therein is our blood-thirstiness, beside which that of the Southern Nigerian savage is negligible, if not estimable, and this European blood-thirstiness it is which threatens to lead to an extravagant reaction to the opposite extreme, as it has already led to an ignoble reaction in our ideals.

For there can be no ideal conception of Life and no true

conception of Nature if we seek to shut out Death and Pain. It is the feeble shrinking from Death and the flabby horror of Pain that mark the final stage of decay in any civilisation. Our ancestors, too, offered up human sacrifices on their altars, and none can say how much of their virility and how much of the promise of the future they held in their grasp were bound up with the fact. Different days bring different duties. And we cannot desire to restore the centuries that are gone. But neither can we afford to dispense with the radical verities of Life and Nature which they recognised. If we do we are felling the tree up which we somehow hope to climb to the clouds.

It is essential to the human dignity of a truly civilised society that it should hold in its hands not only the Key of Birth but the Key of Death.

NOVEMBER 29: The vast and complex machines to which our civilisation devotes its best energy are no doubt worthy of all admiration. Yet when one seeks to look broadly at human activity they only seem to be part of the scaffolding and material. They are not the Life itself.

To whatever sphere of human activity one turns one's attention to-day, one is constantly met by the same depressing spectacle of pale, lean, nervous, dyspeptic human creatures, restlessly engaged in building up marvellously complex machines and elaborate social organisations, all of which, they tell us, will make for the improvement of Life. But what do they suppose 'Life' to be?

A giant's task demands a giant. When one watches this puny modern civilised Man engaged on tasks which do so much credit to his imagination and invention, one is reminded of the little boy who was employed to fill a large modern vat. He nearly completed the task. One day he dis-

appeared. They found him at last with only his feet visible above the rim of the vat.

DECEMBER 1: I so frequently notice among Moral Reformers — for the most part highly well-intentioned people — a frantic and unbridled desire to eliminate from our social world any form of 'Temptation.' (One wonders how far this attitude may have been fostered by that petition of the Lord's Prayer, 'Lead us not into Temptation,' which, on the face of it, seems to support Nietzsche's extravagant reaction against Christianity. Yet surely the Church has misunderstood that petition. Jesus himself faced the Tempter, and it is evident that he could not have so lacked insight into the soul's secrets as to countenance the impossible notion of eliminating Temptation from the world. It was the power to meet the Tempter and yet not be led into Temptation — if this petition may be regarded as authentic — that he desired his followers to possess; and therein he was on the same side as Nietzsche.) No scheme is too extravagantly impossible to invoke in this cause. No absurdity but we are asked to contemplate it with a seriously long face if it is sanctified by the aim of eliminating some temptation from the earth. Of any recognition of Temptation as the Divine method of burning up the moral chaff of the world, not a sign!

The fact is that we cannot have too much Temptation in the world. Without contact with Temptation Virtue is worthless, and even a meaningless term. Temptation is an essential form of that Conflict which is of the essence of Life. Without the fire of perpetual Temptation no human spirit can ever be tempered and fortified. The zeal of the Moral Reformers who would sweep away all Temptation and place every young creature from the outset in a Temptation-free vacuum, even if it could be achieved (and the achievement would not only

annihilate the whole environment but eviscerate the human heart of its vital passions) would merely result in the creation of a race of useless weaklings. For Temptation is even more than a stimulus to conflict. It is itself, in so far as it is related to Passion, the ferment of Life. To face and reject Temptation may be to fortify life. To face and accept Temptation may be to enrich life. He who can do neither is not fit to live.

He can indeed be sent to the Home for Defectives. That way lies perhaps the solution of our Social Problem. The pessimist may cry out at the size of the Homes that his fears portend. Yet, even at the worst, who will deny that it is better, beyond comparison better, that even only a minority of Mankind should be free — free to develop in the sun and free to climb to the sky and free to be damned — than that the whole world should be made one vast Home for Moral Imbeciles?

DECEMBER 4: There is nothing amid the restlessness of the world that one lingers over with such tender delight as Flowers and Gods. What can be more beautiful than Flowers and Gods?

Flowers are of all things most completely and profusely the obvious efflorescence of loveliness in the whole physical world. Gods are of all things the most marvellous efflorescence of the human psychic world. These two Lovelinesses, the Loveliness of Sex and the Loveliness of Creation, bring the whole universe to two polar points, which yet are in the closest degree resemblant and allied. In China, the land of flowers, flowers are nowhere, it is said, so devoutly cultivated as in the monasteries of Buddha. For flowers are constant symbols of the Gods and instruments of worship, and when the Gods take fitting shape it is a shape that recalls to us a flower. Of all Gods made visible none is so divine as Buddha (one's thoughts

constantly return to the most delectable of museums, the Musée Guimet), and the Buddha of finest imagery is like nothing so much as a vast and serene flower, a great lotus that rises erect on the bosom of Humanity's troubled lake.

And perhaps it is because men and women are in function flowers and in image gods that they are so fascinating, even enwrapped in the rags, physical and metaphysical, which sometimes serve but to express more genuinely the Flower-God beneath.

DECEMBER 11: *Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?* So, we are told, an ancient holy man of the early Christian world was wont to question everything that was brought before him. It is a question that we cannot too often ask to-day. I assume that we understand 'Eternity' in its essential Christian sense (on which F. D. Maurice used to insist) as referring not to the Future, but to the Everlasting Present, not to Time but to the Things that Matter.

There are not only far too many people in the world, there are far too many things. Prodigality is indeed the note of Nature. And rightly so. But Economy is the note of Man. Rightly also. For Nature has infinite lives to play with. Man has only one life.

Public Hygiene is nowadays much concerned with the edification of large and effective Destructors of Refuse. It is well. They can scarcely be too large or too effective. Large enough to deal with all the Dreadnoughts of the world and most of its books. And so much else! Let us imitate the Rich, if that seems well, in the quality of our possessions. But in their number let us imitate the Poorest. So in our different human way we may reach towards the Simplicity of Nature.

And let us never grow weary of repeating afresh the stern

challenge of that old champion of the Higher Sabotage: *Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?*

DECEMBER 15: 'There has always been the same amount of light in the world,' said Thoreau. One sometimes doubts it. Perhaps one fails to recognise the 'bushels' it is hidden under. One need not fear that it is becoming less. One must not hope that it will become more.

I wonder whether Mazzini, could he revisit the Italy which reveres his memory, would really find more light there than of old? There was the Italy that Stendhal loved, the Italy that produced Mazzini, who went out into the world as its most inspired prophet and sought so earnestly to regenerate it. And here is the duly regenerated Italy which has gone after what it considers glory in Tripoli and systematically starved its own children, and sent its inspired prophet Marinetti into the world, as it once sent Mazzini. The unregenerate Italy which produced Mazzini or the regenerated Italy which produced Marinetti — which is it, I wonder, that most tries our faith in Thoreau's creed, 'There has always been the same amount of light in the world'?

DECEMBER 28: Lévy-Bruhl, a penetrating and suggestive moralist, has written a book, *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, in which he seeks to distinguish between a primitive pre-logical rationality, not subject to the law of contradiction, and a later logical rationality, which refuses to admit contradictions. He points out how much wider and more fruitful is the earlier attitude.

There seems something in this distinction. But it may well be dangerous to formulate it too precisely. No hard and clear-cut distinctions can here be made. The logical method

can scarcely supersede the pre-logical method, for it covers less ground and is more exclusive, it can never be the universal legatee of the pre-logical method. We are probably concerned with two tendencies which may exist contemporaneously, and each have its value. It may even be said that the pre-logical and the logical temperaments represent two types of people, found everywhere even to-day. Some observers, like Heymans in his thoughtful book on the psychology of women, have noted how women seem often to combine contradictory impulses on an organic basis, but they have not always observed that that gift may be as inestimable as it is dangerous.

In this connection it is interesting to recall that Harnack, the great historian of Christian dogma, while asserting that Athanasius in combating Arianism saved Christianity, yet asserts with equal emphasis that the doctrine of Athanasius embodied a mass of contradictions which multiply as we advance. He might have added that that was why it was vital. Life, even in the plant, is a tension of opposing forces. Whatever is vital is contradictory, and if of two views we wish to find out which is the richest and the most fruitful we ought perhaps to ask ourselves which embodies the most contradictions.

DECEMBER 31: 'The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fade away, as a leaf fadeth off the vine, and as a fading leaf from the fig-tree.' So the world seemed made to Isaiah, and that light airy way of accepting it may linger in one's mind all the more persistently because of its contrast with the heavy solemnity of the Hebraic genius. So it is with all these men of creative genius, whatever nation they belong to. Wherever Man flowers into Genius, wherever, that is to say, he becomes most quintessentially Man, he can never take the world seriously. He vaguely realises that it is merely his own handiwork, his own

creation out of chaos, and that he himself transcends it. So for the physicist of genius the universe is made up of holes, and for the poet of genius it is a dream, and even for the greatest of these solemn Hebraic prophets it is merely a leaf, a fading leaf from the fig-tree.

Qualis artifex pereo! It may well be the last exclamation of the last Son of Man on the uninhabitable Earth.

JANUARY 5, 1914: I see that Professor Saville of the Archæological Department of Columbia University recently found that among the early inhabitants of Ecuador, some hundred thousand years ago, carious teeth were bored and filled with gold and cement, loose teeth also being held together by gold bands, all contrived to show as little as possible; dentistry, in short, in its aims and methods, was already on much the same level as among us.

We imagine that the refinements of luxury are the achievements of our modern times, the cheerful signs of our exalted Civilisation or the damning proofs of our increasing Degeneration. But, with all our effort, we hardly reach back to any stage of Human History or Pre-history when the same state of things — call it Civilisation or Degeneration — was not flourishing in the same degree, and even in the same forms.

So it was that even in the romantic days of the semi-barbarous Elizabethan age, as we choose to suppose it, the end of dinner was announced by

... a silver basin

Full of rose-water and bestrewed with flowers.

And that in the classic days that fell more than a thousand years earlier Athenæus brought together such a vast collection of refined luxuries to his marvellous Banquet; and that long before Homer the men of Crete constructed their sanitary conveniences on exactly the same principles which it is

the boast of modern hygiene to devise, while the costumes of their women, whose portraits were first lately revealed, evoked the surprised comment, 'But they are Parisians!' And now, in an age too far back to measure by human records, long before the traditional date of the creation of the World, we find men and women going to the dentist's to have their teeth stopped with gold.

We see here what Gourmont has called, perhaps a little pompously, 'the Law of Intellectual Constancy,' according to which there has always been the same amount of intellect in the world. You may put your Golden Age at the beginning of human history or at the end. In either case you will be justified.

JANUARY 15: Ortway appears to have shown that, not only the whole of prehistoric research, but the very constitution of our teeth and our stomach, show that Man is an All-eater, *Homo omnivorax*.

This completely agrees with the view that has always seemed to me most reasonable. It is also the only view consistent with a high position of Man in the animal and spiritual world. No being could achieve physical and spiritual success who was not able to eat all things eatable. The highest evolution of organic complexity, the widest intellectual comprehension, the most versatile æsthetic sensibility, are inextricably bound up with that fact.

Loria, the distinguished Italian economist, who has ably and comprehensively discussed the synthesis of income, reaches a definite conclusion: in the past all forms of coercive association in the constitution of income have been exhausted, and now there only remains to adopt free association. It is not otherwise in the income of the organic body. The income of the body is not placed on a sound foundation until, with the com-

ing of Man on earth, the basic natural fact of free association was recognised in the selection and combination of the elements of food. It is Man's part to exercise a fine economy of choice in an inexhaustible wealth of choice.

Those human people who wish to lay down arbitrary taboos on eating and drinking for the benefit of other people are always fair game. And have in some countries been eaten.

FEBRUARY 11: There is no moment when I feel more at home in England, more English, and more proud of being so, than when I note the outbreak of that most quintessential English quality, the love of individual liberty. In other more or less allied countries, in the United States, in France, in Belgium, there is, or there has been under some aspect at some period, a jealous appreciation of the rights of the individual — so long as he observed the elementary rules of law and order — to his own liberty of action even when that liberty ran counter to the notions of the mob. But at the present day there is no country where so fierce and sensitive a resentment guards the attacks on this liberty. See, in spite of all subtle encroachments, the freedom which we give to prostitutes in our streets, and the welcome which — notwithstanding our own arbitrary arrogance in India or in Egypt — we still accord to the political exiles of other lands. Or consider those South African strike-leaders deported back to our shores under martial law. One may admire the gentle vigour, the iron hand in the silk glove, which marked that action, and admit that possibly it was justified, but one enjoys the true British rage which greets that deportation.

I know how this feeling has become centred in England, a net in the sea to catch all the wild and restless free men whom their own countries irked or their own countries cast out. It is no special virtue; I know how it came about, but I share it.

So it pleases me to see how the prim moralist and the enterprising policeman are forced to adopt all the shiftiest tricks of their respective crafts so they may avoid offending that profound instinct of the Englishman. Let them but offend, let them but seem to offend, by deviating a hair's breadth from their shifty path, and I rejoice to see the righteous ferocity of the Englishman flare up as he seizes the offender by the throat and flings him into the gutter.

FEBRUARY 12: I have just seen *Parsifal* on its first introduction to England at Covent Garden, and I am impelled to compare this new impression of the opera with my early impression, some twenty years ago, at Baireuth. On the whole the new experience fails to bring the satisfaction and joy of the earlier experience. I ask myself why that is so. Is it my feeling for *Parsifal* that has changed? Or is it a matter of environment? I assume at the outset that no experience can ever be repeated, and that one can 'never bathe twice in the same stream.'

Certainly the environment counts for much. Baireuth was a shrine of art towards which converged processions of pilgrims from many lands. The Temple on the hillside and all its attendant circumstances were calculated, in a degree unparalleled in the modern world, to evoke an inspiring enthusiasm of art. And everything there was pioneering, even the austere simplicity of the stage scenery, even the solemn shifting of that scenery before our eyes, a delicious revelation of the frank acceptance of an artificial convention. Covent Garden also has its own charm of convention. I seldom enter it without a thrill of delight at its antique, ascetic, eighteenth-century air. But a sacred temple of art, that one could no more call it than one could a very different building, the Opera in Paris. It is just a music hall, like any other, only a

little more fashionable, where people go to digest their dinners by listening to music which lulls them with its agreeable familiarity. And in so far as the audience to-night was not of that type, and certainly to a large extent it was not, one received a painful shock. These people were not pilgrims to a shrine of art, but — they had come to church! There were smug young curates bringing their frail old mothers and doubtless seeking inspiration for next Sunday's sermon. And there was no applause! It was solemnly hushed down. These people had forgotten, if they ever knew, that when Wagner arrived for the first performance of *Parsifal* he brought with him in the carriage a large barrel of lager beer.

This environment has itself an inevitable reaction on one's feeling towards the opera. I begin to look at *Parsifal* in a new light, not as a work of art, but as a *pastiche* of religious notions which are still alive. I feel that I am asked to take the Grail scene as an Anglican Communion, Kundry as a Mary Magdalene, and Parsifal himself as a reincarnation of Jesus. *Parsifal* no longer seems the superb echo of the romance of the early Christian world, but merely an attempt to revive the waning zeal of Little Bethel.

FEBRUARY 16: I sometimes wonder whether every civilisation may not tend to accelerate its own destruction by developing among its members an undue rapidity of nervous reaction, and at the same time by its skill in mechanical invention to make it possible for that unduly swift nervous reaction to exercise a still more unduly swift influence on the conduct of affairs. In all conduct of affairs — and the more so with the growth of civilisation, for that involves increased complexity — nothing is so necessary as prolonged time for reflection. Whatever, therefore, tends to lessen undue speed of nervous reaction, whatever tends to increase the diffi-

culty of translating nervous reaction into practical action, so that reflection may achieve its perfect work, will make for the good of the world. How many people realise this? One asks the question when one sees the popular applause which greets all the efforts of human ingenuity which make for the reverse end.

We are told of Lord Lyons, an extremely able and very characteristically English diplomatist, whose prudence averted more than one war, that the only credit he ever took to himself was that he had 'resisted the temptation "to do something," which always besets one when one is anxious about a matter.' Can we claim that the nervous tension we now cultivate and the ideals of mere speed which we have set before us in the mechanism of life are calculated to aid us in resisting that temptation?

FEBRUARY 22: It often strikes me how different reading is when one has garnered in the greater part of life's experiences from what it was when one was still at the seed-time of life. When one is very young, to read is as it were to pour a continuous stream of water on a parched and virginal plain. The soil seems to have an endless capacity to drink up the stream, sometimes with prolonged perpetual rapture, sometimes with impartial calm indifference, endlessly, unpausingly, with never a disturbing echo.

But when one is no longer young, to read is a very different matter. The parched plain has become a luxuriant forest with lakes and streams in the midst of it. Every image which enters it evokes ancient visions from the depth of its waters, and every tone rustles among the trees with a music so rich in haunting memories that one grows faint beneath their burden.

So now, when I open a book, it often enough happens that I lay it down, satisfied, on the page at which I opened.

MARCH 16: People may be divided into two classes: the people who like to drink the dregs of their cup, and the people whose instinctive preference it is to leave the dregs. This is a distinction which cuts deep into the moral life. The people of the first class are usually counted the more interesting, and necessarily they are able to extract more out of life, more pain, and possibly more pleasure, though one may question the quality of the extract.

Personally I am more in sympathy with those who belong to the other class. I have no wish to be in at the death of anything, and though it is true I have followed the Blatant Beast to his captivity, I would usually prefer to leave a beautiful book unfinished; I have never finished Dante's *Divina Commedia*, nor yet that human comedy, Casanova's *Mémoires*. Even when the restaurant band was playing, just now, a piece I like, I came out, by choice, before the end, even near the beginning, and find my pleasure thereby heightened. It is only so that we gain the possession of unending things. A man of this type, we may be sure, invented that legend of the monk who was called away to matins or evensong at the moment when a vision of the Virgin was vouchsafed to him. And, lo! the vision was still there when he returned to his cell.

MARCH 31: I wandered through the Palazzo Davanzati, delighted with the picture it presents of a reconstituted fourteenth-century Florentine house, as we may please to imagine to ourselves that its mediæval inhabitants were accustomed to have it, even with the bedclothes still on the beds and the wine still in the glasses on the table. It was almost deserted but for a few English, and with a group of them in a farther room the attendant was absorbed in the task of earning a few supererogatory *soldi*. In the large hall was a young Englishman with his old mother. The Eng-

lishman, carelessly smoking a cigar, was lifting all the delicate objects for examination, strumming on the spinet, and generally assuming the lofty airs of the true-born Englishman outside England. His mother, from a little distance, turned round from time to time and anxiously remonstrated with him: 'You must not touch the things. It is forbidden.' He continued on his course imperturbably and silently. The old lady grew sarcastic: 'And you call yourself a Government official! What *will* they say?' At last came the slow and emphatic answer: 'I *don't* know and I *don't* care.'

It seemed to me a highly typical English answer. I realised that the great doings of the English in the world, for good or for evil, have been largely built up on a basis of Not Knowing and Not Caring.

APRIL 2: This skilfully restored Mausoleum of Galla Placidia surely remains one of the supreme jewels of art. In this dim little chamber we seem to see the finest moment in the development of mosaic, by no means the latest, for the later mosaics of the monumental church of San Vitale close by are far less beautiful. Here mosaic is simple and free and altogether lovely. There is an immortal serenity in the blue and starry dome which slowly grows clearly visible in the soft light diffused through the golden window slabs. See, above the entrance, the young Shepherd Christ and his sheep; the lyrical beauty and grace of that vision can nowhere be surpassed in this Ravenna whose old church walls are haunted by shadowy processions of solemn mosaic figures. Here is one of the shrines of our western world.

APRIL 3: A city wonderfully made up of ancient relics of building. In every backyard, it would seem as one glances in, there is a rare old well-head, or a few ancient columns, or a colossal head of Jupiter propped up on the ground to dry old rags. And one finds here all the germs in art of the Middle Ages, the beginnings of Romanesque and the beginnings, too, of Islamism. Even the abounding pierced stone-work is evidently the source of the fascinating pierced *moucharabia* work which seems so peculiarly Islamic. One sees, too, that what furnished the germs of these great movements was not — as one may have been incautiously led to suppose from seeing the crude reflections of it in the North — something rudimentary and primitive, but a very noble, living, and highly developed art — large, serene, accomplished — fitted for fine ends. San Vitale was a great work of living art, the work of highly skilled and large-brained artists who knew how to adjust their work adequately to the ends they sought. The Northerners disfigured this work in their rough attempts to imitate or to steal it, but their instinct was right when they came here for their inspiration. I see now that Ravenna, perhaps even more than Constantinople, and certainly more than Rome — which had already begun to lose vitality — was the direct source of the civilisation of our modern world.

APRIL 5. In Bologna one understands the Bolognese school of painting. I do not love those painters — on this point my tastes are completely conventional — but I see how they were the direct outcome of their environment, and that they even possess a realistic truth. Bologna is scarcely a beautiful city — as Florence, I have this time at length definitely realised, certainly is — but it is a city with a strongly marked character of its own. Everywhere it is brown,

and where there are no bricks and no terra cotta — both of which abound — there are brown washes and brown paint. The ever-present arcades, recalling the Spanish city of Palencia, not only offer perpetual vistas of gloom and dark archways, but they necessarily lead to gloom in the ground floors of the houses, so that artificial light is needed even when the lightest rain is falling from an overcast sky on an April day. The Bolognese are habituated to gloom, even their churches are darker than is usual in Italy, and the fundamental character of light and shade in the Bolognese masters, as well as their prevailing colours, were already determined in the structure of their city. They painted what they saw. I seem also to discern here something of the characteristics and costumes of the people in the Bolognese pictures, though the type which I most easily recall from those pictures — the large dark eyes and dark skin, the fresh red colouring of the full face — was more present in Ravenna than it is here, where it now seems only to survive among the poorest and in peasants from the country outside.

APRIL 6: I have no love for Italian churches, and never linger in them long and lovingly as so often in Spanish churches, Barcelona and Gerona and Palma and Zaragoza and Toledo and Palencia and Salamanca and Astorga — all the churches of all the beautiful cities whose glorious names I tell on the beads of memory. There is no genius for church architecture in Italy, because, I suppose, there is no genius for worship. (How could there be a genius for worship in the land that produced ancient Rome?) Italian Gothic is never Gothic in spirit, and scarcely in form. The campanile of Giotto, which seemed to Ruskin the supreme achievement in architecture, is pretty, even exquisitely pretty; it would perhaps be equally pretty if it were twelve inches in

height instead of nearly three hundred feet. There is no church in Florence wherein I love to linger. Santa Croce, within, gives one an enlarging sense of satisfaction, but as a pantheon rather than as a church. Here at Bologna, San Petronio, which approaches more nearly than usual to living Gothic and contains so many interesting things, gives me no pleasure at all, and the smell of dirt which assails one at the entrance into an atmosphere of human effluvia such as I have never breathed in any Spanish church would alone suffice to sicken any sense of pleasure, if such sense there were. Of all the interesting things it holds, I am only likely to carry away the memory of two, especially the first, which enjoys the advantage of being outside, the lovely reliefs of Jacopo da Quercia, with their free and delightful feeling for beauty, around the central portal, representing Bible history from the days when Adam delved and Eve span onwards. And then there is the Knight whom we see in coloured effigy on his tomb inside, near the west door, the youth who, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, as I learn from the inscription, having lost at gaming, angrily struck with his dagger the image of the Madonna outside the church, thereby knocking off a finger of the Divine Bambino, whereupon, filled with horror at his own deed, he fell to the ground powerless, was seized by the ministers of the church and condemned to death for his sacrilegious act. But then a miracle occurred. The youth recovered his lost vigour. We might have put this down to the natural elasticity of youth, but in the fifteenth century it was obviously the direct action of the pitiful Madonna. In the end the youth was pardoned and the Madonna's image removed to the interior of the church to receive the worship of all good Christians. So all ended well for everybody.

APRIL 22: I see that, in narrating his medical experiences, a physician records a case of what he terms true physiological death. A gentleman of sound heredity, excellent health, and a well-tempered mind, a good business man and a keen sportsman, living a life that was hygienically perfect, when approaching the age of sixty put all his money for greater convenience into a single investment — it was, we are told, the only time he was known to do a dubiously wise action — and shortly after lost nearly the whole of it, finding himself not indeed in abject poverty but no longer in affluence. Thereupon mind and body slowly collapsed and faded away. In a few weeks the man was dead. The autopsy revealed absolutely nothing wrong.

The reasons for living are not the same in all persons, and we may not all of us consider the loss of fortune a completely adequate reason for leaving the world. Yet to how many the thought of such a possibility of death must at some moment in their lives come deliciously! When we have, foolishly or wisely, put all our treasure—no matter whether the treasure of our money or our love — in one place and awake some morning to find that it is gone and our hearts are bankrupt, what is there left? There could be nothing better but to melt and fade away without the painful and wearisome interlude of disease. ‘What is better for a heart,’ says Arthur Symonds in his last volume of poems, ‘than to sleep and be out of pain?’

MAY 20: It sometimes seems to me that one may regard a man’s attitude towards the movement of the birth-rate as a test of his relationship to Nature, and a criterion of his right to live in the world. There is nothing so natural as natality, nothing that is so intimately connected with the physical and the psychic mystery of life. The man who places himself in opposition to its manifestations is a dis-

türbing clog in the mechanism of the world's wheels. At the present moment all the great live communities of men all over the world are concerned in regulating and ordering more reasonably, if not more eugenically, the output of babies which once was left, not to Nature, which is Order, but to the fate of Chance, which is Disorder. Civilisation is bound up with the success of that movement. The man who rejoices in it and strives to further it is alive; the man who shudders and raises impotent hands against it is merely dead, even though the grave yet yawns for him in vain. He may make dead laws and preach dead sermons, and his sermons may be great and his laws may be strong and rigid. But as the wisest of men saw, twenty-five centuries ago, the things that are great and strong and rigid are the things that stay below in the grave. It is the things that are delicate and tender and supple that stay above. And at no point is life so tender and delicate and supple as at the point of sex. There is the Triumph of Life.

MAY 29: It would be amazing, if it were not tragic, to watch the spectacle of Morality as it is played out on the scene of modern life. In reality nothing is simpler than the moral process of life. Whatever men see the majority of their fellows doing, that they call Morality: whatever they see done by the minority outside that compact majority — a minority which is of course partly in advance and partly behind the main body — that they call Immorality. This is a commonplace which has often been set forth. Yet how few there are who accept it simply and act in accordance with it! The mechanism is beautifully right, and yet they all want to stick a mischievous hand into it. If they belong to the compact majority they can never refrain from vituperating the small advance guard in front of them or the larger rearguard (backguard they called it of old) behind them.

And if they belong to either of the minorities, their sneers and their contempt for the great compact majority are equally persistent. And yet it takes all of them to make a world. Their vituperation and their sneers are of less account than what wind blows. Whatever happens, there must always be a majority and there must always be a minority. Nothing can destroy Morality. Nor can anything destroy Immorality. All that happens is that the minority of one age becomes the majority of the next, as the old majority subsides into a minority.

No educated person nowadays refuses to see that the world went just as well in the days of the old classic morality as in the days of the later Christian morality, and that neither was so much worse or so much better than the Nondescript morality of our own days. Yet they were quite different sorts of moralities, and consecrate quite different virtues. Every age has its own morality. A new morality is in every age knocking at the door. It is our best part to welcome the coming guest and to speed the parting guest.

JUNE 4: 'He who recalls an object which has once charmed him desires to possess it again, and under the same circumstances,' Spinoza laid down. And on that declaration Gourmont comments truly: 'But the circumstances are never the same, and that is why one is deceived by women as well as by books. When a woman has not deceived us, it is because we have failed to penetrate all her mystery, superior to changing circumstances, and to our changing selves.'

That is a profound verity, which we may pass by unthinkingly because it seems not to touch us. Yet one day we may find that it touches us, even at the heart's core. Who of us possesses some idolised woman, or some idolised book, and finds not, sooner or later, that he has, as Gourmont so gra-

ciously phrases it, failed to penetrate the woman's, or the book's, mystery?

Spinoza's road has led men joyously by faith over many stony paths, and set wings to their feet, and inspired their hearts to tasks which, without that faith, they could never have achieved or attempted. That is the Road of Life.

Gourmont's road has led men painfully to penetrate the mysteries they thought they knew and to pierce to deeper truths than they had ever conceived, to learn humility for themselves and tenderness for others, and reverence to that Nature who is ever a magic Fiction and a divine Illusion. That also is the Road of Life.

So that if we are truly alive we shall accept the one Road as joyfully as we accept the other Road.

JUNE 6: For many months I have had no inclination to enter a theatre. Ten days ago an impulse took me to Drury Lane, where for the first time I heard and saw Moussorgsky's *Boris Godonov*, with Chaliapin as the Tsar. Ever since, *Boris* has dwelt in my memory as a great manifestation of genius and beauty and strength, superbly rendered by consummate artists, and I feel that I cannot rest until I have seen it and heard it again.

There can surely be no such fine actor as Chaliapin, no such gracious personality, on the operatic stage, and nowhere but from Russia could one find such a chorus, especially in the bass, that so penetrates, inspiring and sustaining, with such long reverberating echoes, into the heart. And then to see these Russians, these real Russians, the Russians of life and not of the stage, acting so simply and so naturally, reproducing all the gestures and attitudes that are so delicious to see once more for one who loves Russia and the Russians!

It is the genius of Moussorgsky which all these things so mag-

nificantly interpret. And Moussorgsky typifies the Genius of Russia: a gigantic untrained child, strong and playful and spontaneous, manifesting itself with a magnificently original energy, and yet with all the child's naïve simplicity, sweet and enormous, like that beautiful young girl-giantess, Elizabeth Lyska, who wandered out of Russia on to the music-hall stage of Europe a quarter of a century ago. That is the genius of Moussorgsky. That also is the Genius of Russia.

JUNE 13: The Salvation Army is holding a great International Congress in London, and London is swarming with Salvationists. I realise more deeply, what I have often felt before, the special temperament of these people as it is written in their faces. The faces, often enough, were clearly of no rarely fine texture to work on, but one scarcely notices it any more, for these faces are lit by the flame of an inward divine joy which radiates human love through a transparent mask. They are faces full of an eager vitality which has blossomed out in the presence of human needs. There is no effort after holiness in these faces, nor any constraint of virtue, but complete relaxation. I realise here the truth of what I wrote thirty years ago, that even laughter has in it something of that dilatation of joy which is religion. They have realised that religion is not a dogma, a creed, a painful obedience to a rule, but just emotion. That is what has not been realised by those innumerable Christian sectarians whose faces are so moulded into painful artificiality by professionalism, by virtue, by continual tension, by, at the best, some heroic struggle. The Salvation Army has understood religious propaganda better than it has ever been understood since Loyola sent forth his Army with just this same pretence of militarism, the same zeal, the same supple adaptability to human needs, the same frank acceptance of emotion. And the religious emotion of

these Salvationists is so natural and so human that we feel it jars not at all with mere earthly love. Look at that boy and girl wandering arm-in-arm along Fleet Street, so absorbed in each other's personality, as happily and as sweetly in love as though they were not Salvationists at all, but just mere cannibalistic unconverted heathens.

JUNE 17: There is no human soul in sight on this large expanse of breckland, nor likely to be all day long; far away indeed one faintly discerns here and there a human habitation but no indication of human life. So here among luxurious elastic hillocks we choose our place of repose. Here we may spread our simple meal, here we may discourse of the whole universe or read from the books we have brought, *Yang Chu's Garden of Pleasure* and *Les Cents Nouvelles Nouvelles*, books that seem to harmonise with each other and with our mood of the moment: the wise old Chinese philosopher of twenty-two centuries ago, renouncing nothing, yet seeking nothing, content with the concord between Nature and the Individual, with the possession of the absolutely essential things; and that series of marvellously variegated scenes from the European life of the fifteenth century — once attributed to the genius of Antoine de la Salle — scenes all the more true to life because distorted by no moral, and under the unfamiliar disguise of ancient manners bringing so vividly before us the same problems of human nature which perplex us to-day.

It is a warm day but soft. The warmth of the sun and the coolness of the air seem at this delicately poised moment of the year to alternate rhythmically in delicious harmony. Afar from the eyes of men, we are free to open our garments and so far as we will to fling them off, so that sun and air alike may play deliciously through on our flesh. Here is the

atmosphere of Giorgione's Concert. Here is the Wilderness of Omar Khayyám. Yet still it is England, and our jug of wine is ale and the larks furnish our music.

In a few days, among the crowds of London streets, this day will seem to both of us a dream that was never lived in the world.

JUNE 18: It is a significant but at first sight a puzzling fact that the single surviving chapter of the philosophy of Yang Chu has come down to us embedded in the Taoist writings of Lieh Tzu. That is to say, that a disciple of Lao-Tze, the supreme mystic — so delicately disdainful of the material and sensuous side of the world, so incomparable an artist in building the Universe out of Nothing — has been the sole means of handing to us across more than two millenniums the brief utterances of the great philosophical anarchist who carried to the extreme point the Economy of Philosophy, and taught that if we know how to confine ourselves to the wise activity of the senses, the world would become a scene of perfect harmony, and of perfect joy, for all men.

It is puzzling, but only at first sight. For the mystic explanation of the Universe is the ultimate explanation and the largest. The philosophy of Lao-Tze could not have been comprised within that of Yang Chu. But within the philosophy of Lao-Tze there is room for all the sensuous joyousness and all the cynical daring of Yang Chu. The conventional moralists, after the manner of their kind, from his own day even to ours, have viewed Yang Chu with almost unspeakable reprobation. His Garden of Pleasure has found its immortal refuge beneath the shield of Lao-Tze the Mystic.

JUNE 20: We went a pleasant walk to-day with the excuse of exploring one of the houses of the People's Refreshment House Association, a type of house I have never come across in my adventures among country inns.

This was a small inn in a very small village remote from any town. The village is indeed merely a few scattered houses around the church, a dilapidated church with roof so leaky that pools lie on its pavements. The inn, which stands opposite the church, was until lately even more dilapidated, a dirty and ruinous hole, we were told by the cheery and vigorous landlady who, with her husband, an old soldier, now manages the place under the Association's control.

To-day, with hard work and clearly no very great outlay, but obviously under the eye of a clever directing feminine mind from London, the old place has been transformed, and yet at the same time brought nearer to its original aspect. All the old features of the building are retained and emphasised, where they are useful and beautiful, but modern features are boldly introduced whenever modern demands make them desirable, regardless of archæological harmony. Here is the bar-room where the village rustics may sit and drink as in any other public-house; for alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are alike supplied, and of the best quality, though the manager receives no profit on the alcoholic drinks and the walls are not covered by their manufacturers' advertisements. Here, also, are two neat, fresh, and pleasant bedrooms upstairs where the weary visitor from town may inhale the deep rural peace of this pleasant spot and listen to the song of its birds.

Reason is one, and the forms of unreason are many. The forces of Drink have joined hands with the forces of Teetotalism to attack the reasonable Temperance of the People's Trust, and have sometimes been successful. But Reason and Temperance, it seems, are not always crushed.

JUNE 22: We have walked some two miles from Worstead, through country lanes, on pilgrimage to the fourteenth-century iron-work on the south door of Tunstead Church. Worstead, though its name is known wherever the English language is spoken, is to-day but a sleepy, straggling, almost deserted village around its boldly placed magnificent church, set in a frame of the most gorgeously poppy-stained fields that one may well find in England. Tunstead is a still more insignificant village, only inhabited by a few agricultural labourers, and its vicar leaves his work among the roses of his garden to fetch the very long and venerable key, the key of the south door, and with a glance, in these days of sacrilegious suffragettes, at the little bag my companion carries, he entrusts it to our keeping. As we approach the door a doubt almost begins to formulate itself. That iron-work — merely a boss for the handle, over the key-hole, and a spreading scroll-work of foliage in relief, so delicate and so consummate — can it really be five centuries old and not of yesterday? But the growth of such a doubt is speedily checked. We do not live in a world where iron springs into life so simply and so exquisitely as here, with so careless a grace of immaculate perfection. There is nothing in it, its rising and drooping curves are spontaneous and effortless, and the sight of it, even the vision of it in memory, may yet well be an inspiring joy for ever.

Tunstead Church is not unworthy to be the home of the finest jewel of artistry in iron-work which England owns. The vicar is tirelessly seeking for funds to accomplish repairs and restorations, but at present one cannot easily find any church in England which is at the same time so full of antique beauty and so untouched. The fine rood screen of the fifteenth century, not to be compared for its paintings to the unparalleled screen at Ranworth a few miles away, is yet more typically English. And here is the platform for the rood still left standing aloft, level with the doorway in the arch, and the

marks in the beam of the body and limbs of the rood itself are still as clear to see as though the crucifix had been torn down yesterday and not nearly four hundred years ago. Even more interesting, and new evidence of the perpetual originality of our English churches, is the raised stone platform, about a yard wide, extending across the east wall of the chancel, with a vaulted chamber beneath and a grating open to the steps leading to the platform on the north side and a door to the chamber on the south. No one knows what this platform was for. But the whole arrangement, as others have pointed out, was admirably adapted for Mystery Plays, with the grating as a trap-door to Hell, and the people of Tunstead perhaps anticipated my own opinion as to the virtues of a Church as Theatre.

That was long centuries ago. To-day the descendants of those people of Tunstead under whose eyes, probably by whose hands, perhaps by their brains, the daring and unique grace of this church developed, are a handful of agricultural labourers, only born to sow and to reap and to consume the perishing fruits of the earth.

JUNE 27: This is Yarmouth and to-day is Market-day. It is pleasant to recall the memory of a brief visit some twenty years ago, to confirm and extend the impressions then received. The only 'seaside resorts' which to me are pleasant or even tolerable are those which, like Fécamp, possess an organic life of their own and an individual aspect of their own, not those which are mere feeding patches for parasitic visitors.

Yarmouth has always possessed, and still retains, an ample, dignified, characteristic life of its own. It is in consequence of this self-conscious, individual, slowly matured organic life that it is so pleasant to wander about Yarmouth, whether through

its great open spaces or its narrow ancient 'rows,' which yet seem never the abode of abject unsavoury poverty.

Yarmouth has always had a closely knit collective life which I attribute in part to its position of antagonism in relation to neighbouring towns and in part to the unity of its interests as a fishing town. Hence it is, no doubt, that of all large English towns Yarmouth is the town of a single church, and that the largest parish church in England, the Church of Saint Nicholas, the fisherman's patron, who has so many churches also on the opposite coast.

I see, indeed, in Yarmouth and its people the intimate evidence of close contact, of real relationship, with the people and the civilisation of the opposite Low Countries. It is visible even in the most conspicuous traits of their architecture. Here are the step-like gables of Antwerp, and the curved gables of Haarlem, and the broad house-doors of Delft. The most delightful jewel of domestic architecture here, the almshouses for old fishermen in the Market-Place, is English yet with an exotic flavour of Flanders. Even the people have in their veins the same enriching alien element. See these countrywomen and girls who have brought their produce into the market, often so bright-eyed and so well-spoken, and always so vividly alive; those old unions with Flemish stocks from across the sea have clearly created new elements which we shall scarcely find in either of the parent stocks. The gain has certainly been to the women at least as much as to the men. These clearly are the women whose grandmothers buried their men in the neighbouring churchyard and duly inscribed on the gravestone, after the defunct's name the leading fact that he was the husband of so and so. And what a charming market they set forth! I do not know where in England one may find so attractive a market. For one notes, as nowhere else in England, so far as I know, a touch of the artist, however crude and elementary. See the almost pathetic little traces of

taste, everywhere visible, how the bundles of flowers are placed around the joints of meat and between the fowls, and how pictorially these fowls are dressed for the cook, they might have come out of a Dutch or Flemish picture; everywhere there is some curious little touch of feeling for arrangement or for colour, even in the way these three or four white eggs are placed on a heap of delicately green beans, every woman seeming to wish to blend harmoniously the varied produce she has brought to market. I realise that I am in the region which is the chief centre of English painting, the home of Crome and of Cotman, of Gainsborough and of Constable.

JULY 2: I sometimes wonder why I can be so well content to make a meal off bread and an artichoke, though I had nearly reached middle life before I attempted to eat an artichoke. I mean of course that artichoke which is a Composite flower, and not the tuber which claims to be a 'Jerusalem artichoke,' although it is not an artichoke and never came from Jerusalem.

Perhaps my satisfaction is in part due to the very fact that it is a flower, a beautiful and noble flower on its massive stalk, and indeed — though eating flowers may have become a sort of fashion — the only flower of which in our clime one can make a meal. There is also a certain orderly and almost æsthetic progression towards the heart of it, so that a predilection for the artichoke seems to assume some degree of fine taste. And the pleasure of eating it is enhanced by the fundamental fact that it is eaten with the fingers, for the food that we eat with our fingers is ever that which tastes sweetest; the relative distaste for animal food must be associated with the fact that we have acquired a disgust for eating it with our fingers. There is finally the exhilaration of the miracle that what remains of the meal is seemingly more than what consti-

tuted it, and so we are brought near to the days when twelve baskets full remained over at the end of some divine repast.

JULY 4: After a period of drought we have had a day or two of rain; now to-day again the sky is clear and the sun is bright. I sit in the Old Garden before the deep blaze of the roses and the penetrating blue of the delphiniums against the luminous greenery. I realise afresh how delicious a gift is the rain.

It has sometimes seemed strange to me that Henri de Regnier, who above all writers has celebrated the loveliness of the forms of water, hates rain. Certainly on our northern clime the benediction of rain is often too profusely poured. Yet, after all, there is no form of water more beneficent and even more delightful, so sweet to the ears as one listens to it from the shelter of one's bed, or to the touch as its soft beat overtakes one, or to the sense of smell as it evokes all the most delicate odours of the garden, or to the eyes which trace its fascinating path across the distant sky and watch the impact of its beautiful feet on the sea.

What would our London be without the rain which for ever washes its beauty fresh from stain and transforms its murky air into pure radiance?

We feel the endless pathos of him who was 'awearied of the sun,' and surely there is some pathos also in them who are awearied of the rain.

JULY 6: One is so often tempted in this world to allow oneself to be lashed into rage by its Intolerance, its Injustice, its Sordidness, its Imbecility, even its mere tame Monotony. And I am not at all sure that we do wrong to be angry,

and that our Hate of Hate or our Scorn of Scorn is not fully justified.

Yet, after all, let us never forget also that we have been so constituted as to be able to regard the World as a Spectacle. Surely, the author of that fantastic book of *The Revelation of Saint John* has expressed not only the attitude of the man of science ('vicious types of character are not more numerous in one age than in another,' is the result of Dr. Woods's painstaking investigation) but the eternal attitude of the artist. 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' This book may not altogether evoke our complete admiration. But no work of art ever written is based so largely on the sole sense of vision or more boldly metaphorises the World as a Spectacle.

JULY 9: In the Upper House of Convocation yesterday the Bishops were called upon to express distress and apprehension at the large number of criminal assaults on children. They did so. The Archbishop of Canterbury rose to the occasion and declared that 'the subject was so grave as to make one feel one was touching the very Gates of Hell; but there was something the Gates of Hell should not prevail against.' Whereupon their Lordships 'passed a resolution,' in order to 'demand yet further legislation on the subject.' The Gates of Hell, they clearly saw, cannot prevail against a Parliamentary Bill.

One need scarcely pause to make the commonplace remark that whatever the efficacy of Parliamentary Bills as battering rams against the Gates of Hell, we can scarcely imagine any method more unlike the method of Jesus. Laws and law-makers, as Jesus saw them, are of this world. He disregarded with supreme contempt all the makeshifts of external regula-

tion which cannot touch the soul. He was only concerned with realities.

It is a more serious matter that these Christians who so cheerfully, and so complacently, betray their Master, have on their side all the worldly wise and the secularistic and the atheistic, the general body of the Respectable Classes. They have all eaten of the same poisonous fruit, they all pursue the mirage of the same Artificial Paradise, they all dream of a world where evils will be removed by Parliamentary enactment. Let us but pass a new law, they cry, and all's well with the world.

What is the thirst for alcohol and morphia and all the poisons of the apothecary compared with the soul-destroying thirst for the poison of Laws?

JULY 21: When I ask myself what peoples of the world of the higher cultures have been more than others Artists, I find five whom I should place in the first rank: the Chinese (and subordinate to them the Koreans and the Japanese), the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Mediterranean peoples of Islam at a certain moment of their development, and the French.

The Chinese were supreme artists in philosophy and morals, in pottery, in painting, possibly in poetry; the Egyptians in architecture and sculpture and design generally; the Greeks in science and philosophy and poetry and sculpture; the Islamic peoples in domestic architecture and all the affairs of daily life; the French in architecture and painting and many minor activities as well. Moreover, all these peoples were not only supreme in more than one art, but they were supremely accomplished in the art of living itself; they revealed new forms of morality; they sought perfection in social relationships; they were artists in the smallest details of life; they knew of nothing so mean that it could not be made beautiful.

Other peoples have excelled at special points, as the Eng-

lish in poetry and the Dutch in painting and the Germans in music. But their artistic impulses have never been strong enough either to attain supremacy in many fields or to make the supreme conquest of life itself. There have only been the Chinese and the Egyptians and the Greeks and the peoples of Islam and now the French.

JULY 24: Hartmann von der Aue in his *Saint Gregory on the Rock* has described how for his great offences a man was chained to a rock in the sea for seventeen years. At the end of that time messengers came from Rome to the prisoner, purified and glorified by Punishment, to announce to him his election as Pope.

For many years I, and others, have maintained that the conception of Punishment is not of our time but a survival from the far past, and that it is our business to replace it by a more modern conception of the Protection of Society by the appropriate treatment, to the end of reformation, of those who offend against society. But I have never seen the complete modern decay of the old conception of Punishment more vividly illuminated than by this legend.

Punishment was a really living idea in the thirteenth century. And here we see that one of the greatest poets of that century thought it perfectly natural and just that a man redeemed by the infliction of Punishment should be found meetest of all men to occupy the highest and most sacred post the world could offer. As a matter of fact, the Triple Crown was not regarded as a reward for Punishment even in the thirteenth century; we only see that for a man who represented supremely the spirit of that age it was reasonable so to regard it.

But in this twentieth century not even the most minor of our poets would dream of canonising the most punished of our

criminals, whosoever he may be, or of placing him upon even so much as the archiepiscopal throne of Canterbury. The conception of Punishment is a foreign body in our social system, a fossilised vestige of the past, done for and dead.

JULY 28: Amid the endless procession of nondescript persons along the streets—who so often seem only differentiated, and that but a little, by their clothes—now and again one seems to perceive an indubitable person. As I was walking rapidly along near Victoria Station to-day, absorbed in my own thoughts, I chanced to pass closely a figure which in that brief single flash remains in memory, of all the undistinguished figures I have passed during the day, the vision of a Person. It drew my attention first by a doubt as to its sex. But the plain flat cap, set decisively on one side, and the man's light overcoat over the straight slender figure, a student's or an artist's, ended, one soon noted, in a blue skirt and little feminine feet. It was, too, one swiftly realised, a girl's face that fitted the figure so frankly simple in its originality, a grave sweet face, refined and intellectual, unassuming, almost shrinking, yet with the notable piquancy of a pronounced black down on the upper lip against the firmly toned matt background of the complexion. One thought of some Veronese or Paduan youth on the Shakespearian stage whose sister found it so easy to put on and off her brother's shape. A shy yet daring figure it was that passed me in that flash of vision, seeking to express itself, yet sad with the incompleteness of its own bisexual mystery.

AUGUST 2: To-day, when war seems to be breaking out all over Europe, I take up the poems of Léon Deubel, that fine poet who ended his life in despair at the age

of thirty-five last year, and read the Preface by his friend Louis Pergaud.

What a different world! If one thinks of it, surely a more adequate and satisfying world. For we see that when Man sets himself to tasks that are too great for him, when he attempts to create Empires and rule the world, in the infinite expansion of his imbecility and his impotence he becomes the incarnate Devil, in a very different sense from those 'poor devils,' as we condescendingly call them, who have fallen to the bottom of the social scale. Nothing can be more monstrous or more pitiful to-day — according as you like to take it — than the records of Emperors and Kings, of politicians and diplomatists. And the 'poor devils' of our social state — whose chief crime is that they have not swept Europe and Kings and politicians off the face of the earth — when we look into their lives, come before us perfect in their human adequacy, even angels in their mutual charity and compassion.

Men talked of old of the judgements 'written in Heaven' which reversed the judgments of earth, and one may well admit that even in the most scientific Heaven, wherever that may be established, it is the deeds of these 'poor devils' which could most honourably be inscribed in letters of gold, when he has finally vanished from the barren earth, on the Tomb of Man.

So when Human Stupidity is threatening War on every hand, and we grow weary of Hell in High Places, let us turn with joy to these humble and fallen men on the midnight pavement of Paris who live, without knowing it, according to the Sermon on the Mount.

AUGUST 10: How unfailingly the Irony of Providence has arranged that every country's function of Moral Consciousness shall be exercised vicariously by all the

other countries! To-day, for instance, see how the virtuous English moralists point to the mills of God in Germany. The harvest of blood and iron which Bismarck sowed is now being reaped and the sheaves to-morrow will be gathered home. The fatal annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, which had made Europe an armed camp during the greater part of the lives of all of us, was the predisposing cause of the present cataclysm, and the annexation of Bosnia was the exciting cause. Finally, another aggression, the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, will bring a swift vengeance on the evil-doers.

So in England we are able to exercise the function of moral consciousness for a large part of Europe, in England, which on the occasion of the Boer War aroused the contempt and hatred of the whole civilised world.

AUGUST 14: *Sub tegmine fagi.* The sky is a cloudless blue and the breeze murmurs pleasantly through the leaves overhead and the butterflies chase one another idly and the doves coo at intervals and the stream pressed by the water-lilies is almost too languid to move beneath the heat. Perfect peace seems to rule the world and the reign of Heaven begun on earth.

I note these things and I note them with only sadness. For to-day, it is said, five nations are beginning to fight the greatest battle in the history of the world, and over the whole cradle of human civilisation the Powers of Hell are let loose. *Vae victis! Vae victoribus!*

SEPTEMBER 13: After all, when one reads Lanciani's *Destruction of Rome*, which I chance to find on the well-filled shelves of this little cottage, one realises that there is a difference between the ancient Goths and their descend-

ants not clearly indicated by the rhetoric of Saint Augustine, whose *De Civitate Dei* I have lately been looking into afresh. The ancient Goths were sometimes incendiaries, but their chief motive was loot. They carried away precious things on a wholesale scale, but they developed no systematic methods of barbarism, no sacrilegious violation of the traditions of humanity. They even respected the sacred Christian enclosures of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

But by the modern Goths all the things their forefathers did, and all the things they refrained from doing, have been formulated into principles, systems of iron and methods of blood, cold, hard, relentless, always to be justified by the supreme law of 'military necessity.' This is the heavy yoke now imposed on the patient necks of the laborious kindly sentimental Germans by their Prussian taskmasters.

Surely at no period of the world's history has it been so necessary as it is to-day to strike hard at Militarism. Never before has it been so clearly visible that all civilisation, even all the most elementary traditions of humanity and brotherhood, depend on the absolute destruction of Militarism.

SEPTEMBER 27: Here in this remote hill-land of Buckinghamshire it is pleasant to feel the bright hot sun in autumn, even though the nights are keen, and to inhale the clear exhilarating air. It is pleasant to wander along the curving lanes, with their constant sharp rises and falls, and their far vistas, deserted, save for an occasional cyclist, of travellers, as the refugee from cities notes with delighted surprise; pleasant also to walk in solitude for miles through the silent beechwoods, now strewn with dead leaves, yet still with patches of fresh green and shafts of bright sunshine, so silent, so solitary, that one might expect to come on Robin Hood and his men round any thicket; one can well believe how often

here the traveller of old disappeared for ever and how necessary was the office of the Guardian of the Chiltern Hundred whose business it was to keep brigands in check.

It is an ancient land, where the Romans have left their mark; but it can never have been a rich and populous land. We are far from East Anglia where the grandiose remains of an active and populous people are still so numerous. Churches here are few and simple, and the rural inns are for the most part only cottages. But though scanty, the population is of fine type, friendly and alert, unlike the heavier Saxons of farther south, and with an accent in their speech that recalls the north, slender, graceful, blue-eyed girls and merry, rosy-cheeked boys like their beautiful apples which now burden the boughs on every cultivated patch of orchard.

One soon seems to discern the spiritual temper of this land. It is that of a hardy, independent, unspoilt hill-folk, tenacious of individual rights, their own and other's. (It seems significant that the churches about here have retained their brasses uninjured by the passions of the seventeenth century.) I understand how it was that John Hampden, whose family had dwelt there for six centuries, belonged to the next village — where 'Free' even to-day seems to be a Christian name — and how he easily found stiff-necked but well-tempered 'village Hampdens' of the same self-sufficing, locally patriotic make, remote from King and country, to worry over ship-money, while to-day, it is curious to note, these highlands send many men to the navy though few to the army. I understand, too, how William Penn came to live a few miles away, where his grave is still a shrine of this land, and how a little farther east in this same county Milton once found a home.

OCTOBER 12: Maurice Barrès, it appears, a while ago, in his perverse manner, referred with indifference to the bombardments of Rheims Cathedral: Let the monuments go, he said in effect, so long as we preserve the men. One may, however, well feel a sensitive sympathy with the pain and wretchedness now being so widely scattered over the richest lands and among the best people of our European home and yet also feel a peculiar pang and a fierce indignation over the destruction of the loveliest and rarest things that men of old have left to us. It is indeed a narrow view of humanity to comprise within its circle its crude material, sentient and full of promise, yet meant for death, and to exclude the most perfect revelation of its sentiency and promise, wrought for an immortal life beyond death, which whoso slays, as Milton says, 'slays an immortality rather than a life.' A finer inspiration than that of Barrès was in the spirit of a mere ordinary soldier I read of in the newspaper to-day, a French soldier near Lille, badly wounded, and yet only moved by the thought of a mere monument, and that not even out of patriotism, for it was not on French soil. "Oh!" he declared, "if we can only save Antwerp! You know the towers with the bells which have chimed every quarter of an hour since Alva's days?" And in his anger, despite his wound, he raised himself to shout forth his protest against the loss of a magnificence which he had seen and admired and remembered.'

After all, Pain and Death, in one form or another, sooner or later, are the lot of all of us, and so far as the race is concerned, it may not be so grave a matter how or when they come. What the race lives by is its traditions, its power of embodying the finest emanations of its spirit and flesh in forms of undying beauty and aspiration which are never twice the same. These traditions it is which are the immortal joy and strength of Mankind, and in their destruction the race is far more hopelessly impoverished than in the destruction of any

number of human beings. For it is by his traditions that Man is Man and not by the number of meaningless superfluous millions whom he spawns over the earth.

So it is that while my heart aches for the fates of countless thousands of innocent men and women and children to-day, I am none the less sad as I think day and night of the rare and exquisite flowers of ancient civilisation I knew and loved of old, now crushed and profaned. I think of the broad and gracious city of Liège, of the narrow streets of ancient Louvain, crowded with rich traditions, of lovely and beautiful old Malines, its exquisite carillon still ringing in my ear, of Antwerp entwined with the earliest memories of my childhood, of Rheims which I saw for the first and last time only a few months ago, a shrine for the whole human race, which will linger for ever in my mind because it seemed to me that its walls and its windows held the most exquisite and human and daring pictures in stone or in glass which our northern race has created.

OCTOBER 19: My bells are jangled and fall silent. I am sorry. Yet I would not have it otherwise. They are not hung in an ivory tower.

By day and by night I think of the Great War. But I never have any wish to write about it. If I could I would forget it. In the Peninsular War, it is said, one of Wellington's generals was guilty of a flagrant act of insubordination, and Wellington, who in little matters was so hard a disciplinarian, took no notice. They asked him later how it was. 'By God,' he replied, 'it was too serious.' This war to-day seems to me the most flagrant act of insubordination committed by Man against Civilisation and Humanity. It is too serious for the lash of discipline to touch. We must leave it at that.

OCTOBER 24: I read in the newspaper to-day that a French infantryman was walking into his trench eating a pear when a shell whizzing through the air burst and the man was thrown to the earth in a cloud of dust. Before his comrades could speak, he was on his feet again shouting angrily, 'The pigs! They have made me drop my pear!'

I have long known that the pear may distort moral values. When I was a child the first and last time that I ever appropriated any of my parents' money without leave was to buy pears. Evidently pears made it worth while to become a criminal. (And has not Saint Augustine confessed that, even when he was older than I was, he stole pears?) It is interesting to find that moral values are thus distortable not only under normal but under abnormal circumstances. That he had saved his life seemed to the infantryman but a little thing. For he had lost his pear. Our conventional valuations, which we often accept so easily, are evidently not of the essence of Nature, and in moments of sudden inspiration these commonly accepted conventional values are made to look small.

So my mind idly plays on the surface. Yet all to-day, beneath the surface, my deeper thoughts are fixed, and my heart is heavy, and all my dreams are of one afar, tossing on the sea.

NOVEMBER 7: It is not easy, or perhaps possible, to remember a year which has been like this — in England and all over Northern Europe — so bright, so agreeably warm, so pleasantly temperate throughout, so abundantly fruitful. Now, even in November and here in London, the days are continuously warm and clear and often even bright and sunny, while rain falls at night — a meteorologic condition which has always seemed to me perfect for

London in November when fog is for ever awaiting its chance, against wind and rain, to pounce down on the city.

The poet sang of 'Nature red in tooth and claw.' But we realise to-day that — if we are to adopt the conventional distinction — it is Man to a vastly greater extent than Nature who is truly 'red in tooth and claw.' To-day it is Nature rather than Man that comes before us as the exalting and civilising element in the world's life. Men — the men we thought the most civilised in the world — are to-day over a great part of the earth rending each other hideously by means of the most terrible weapons that intelligence can devise, sprinkling the soil with mutilated corpses, torturing women and children, inflicting a wider and vaster amount of complex suffering than it ever entered into the imagination of a Dante to conceive.

And over that spectacle we can almost believe that it is with a deliberate and conscious sympathy for her erring children that the Great Mother has covered the earth with such tender smiles and tears as never before, and lavished her sweetest consoling fruits with an unknown profusion.

NOVEMBER 10: In places that have been the homes of great spirits there is always for me — and I suppose for many — a peculiar charm, a haunting intimacy, a rarely inspiring and abiding joy. I cherish for ever the memory of the serene and beautiful town — if after thirty years it still remains so — of Stratford-on-Avon. The delightful little Prieuré on the bank of the Loire, in the island, as it once was, of Saint-Cosme — then regarded as the most beautiful spot in Touraine and lovely and lonely yet, though within easy reach of the great city of Tours — makes Ronsard, who loved it, a real person to me. I seem to have felt the actual breath of Rousseau ever since I visited the homes of that dis-

tracted spirit, Les Charmettes among the hills of Savoy and the spectrally fragile cottage of the Hermitage on the outskirts of the forest of Montmorency.

To-day we have walked some four miles to a little cottage in the main street of the quaint old village of Chalfont Saint Giles. It stands at right angles to the road and faces south to the little garden, an insignificant cottage of brick slightly timbered, like thousands of others; but here the blind Milton once came to live during the Great Plague, and here, it seems probable, he put the last touches to *Paradise Lost*. The room on the farther side from the road, they say, was his study, a very little simple room, low-ceiled, with small beams, yet large enough to hold the most gigantic of English poets, and not so simple but it remains standing alone of all the houses he dwelt in, save only the Old Rectory House at Stowmarket, curiously similar to this, as I recall, though on a larger scale, where he was the Puritan rector's pupil. Milton never saw the room in which he lived, though, we may be sure, he sat at the casement or in the now vanished porch to catch the clear wintry sun of the Chiltern Hills.

It was scarcely by chance that he came to live at the edge of the Chilterns. He had known the neighbourhood well in youth, and in old age he was drawn to it because it was the great centre of the Quakers, towards whom — with his instinct of freedom, his haughty self-reliance, his defiantly rebellious scepticism for all current creeds — there was so much to draw this Samson Agonistes of poets.

NOVEMBER 17: The Funeral Service of the Church of England, when it becomes poignant with personal memory, is surely an impressive rite. As a religious statement it may cease to evoke our faith. But as an affirmation of the boundless Pride and Humility of Man it remains

superb. When the priest walks before the coffin as it is borne towards the choir, and scatters at intervals those brave and extravagant Sentences, we are at once brought face to face with the bared and naked forms of Life and Death. For the rhythmic recurrence of that Bravery and that Extravagance only heightens the pungency of the interspersed elemental utterances in the rite, those pathetically simple gestures which impart to it Beauty and Significance, 'We brought nothing into the world and it is certain that we can take nothing out. ... Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' After all, it is hard to see how the solemnity of this final moment when Life touches Death, and a man at last vanishes from the earth's surface, could better be brought home in its central essence than by the splendid audacity of a rite which calls down the supreme human fictions to bear their testimony at the graveside to all their Creator's Humility and all his Pride.

To me it has its double measure of solemn sadness. For to-day, maybe, that rite has in this Kentish graveyard for the last time been paid to any of the males of my house, who in centuries of old showed themselves so faithful to its observance, and in beautiful old churchyards of Suffolk and of Kent counted it their high office to scatter the grace of this final Mystery over so many human things that now are woven afresh into the texture of the world.

NOVEMBER 21: I seemed to be in my room, where I now in fact find myself, and I became aware with a slight shock of a dusky object, at the first glance like a large spider, on the wall. It arose as I turned to it, and I saw a lovely butterfly. I threw open the window wide and shepherded the beautiful orange and black creature out into the blue and sunny sky.

It was a dream, as I realised when I awoke, and had no

literal origin that I knew of, for there are no butterflies in bright skies now. But who knows by what subtle alchemy of the mind the symbolisms of our experiences are sublimed?

DECEMBER 13: Last week the Queen's Hall Orchestra played the 'Danse Macabre' of Saint-Saëns, and when the bones of so many heroic and unheroic men are lying buried, or scarcely buried, on so many European plains, that daintily ingenious Dance of Death took on a new and more solemn significance. The light pathetic gaiety of its rhythm became the accompaniment of the awful vision. It was the spirit of Nature herself which seemed to make playful music to Man's tragedy, lightly dancing over the shallow graves he finds it so easy to dig and drawing music from his bones. This week the New Symphony Orchestra has played not only that piece but the 'Funeral March of a Marionette.' It is really an interesting manifestation of the musical mind.

The complacent saccharine lachrymosity of Gounod is antipathetic to me. This 'Funeral March of a Marionette,' I have always thought, is his one masterpiece, just as, and for a rather similar reason, 'The Battle of Blenheim' is Southey's one masterpiece in verse; these pompously sentimental people need to be brought into simple playful reaction with the world, and the most demagogic politician may glow amiable in our eyes if we discover him pig-a-back with his children. Here at last Gounod felt that his sugary tears might be out of place and so was free to develop the playful tragedy of those delicious little beings of Man's creation which have always been so fascinating and so suggestive to the artist and to the philosopher.

One wonders if that is why the New Symphony Orchestra in the present unparalleled activity of the human puppets in

shattering one another to bits on their little stage finds a fit occasion to play 'The Funeral March of a Marionette.'

CHRISTMAS DAY: It is said that the Great War has led to a revival of religion. One is almost inclined to believe it in this huge unfinished cathedral at the Pontifical High Mass to-day. The misty air softens the bare walls into homely beauty and the huge candles at the entrance to the choir flame slowly as though they had all eternity to burn in, and beautiful voices, liquid or deep, sweep through the air, bearing the sound of music that was made long ago, and of words that began in the early world, to a vast crowd which fills the place with its devotion and makes the old tradition still seem alive.

As the gracious spectacle of the Mass is unrolled before me, I think, as I have often thought before, how much they lose who cannot taste the joy of religion or grasp the significance of its symbolism. They have no faith in gods or immortal souls or supernatural Heavens and Hells, they severely tell us. But what have these things, what have any figments of the intellect, to do with religion? Fling them all aside as austere as you like, or as gaily, and you have not touched the core of religion. For that is from within, the welling up of obscure intimations of reality into the free grace of Vision. The Mass is a part of Nature. To him who sees, to him who knows, that all ritual is the attempt to symbolise and grasp the divine facts of life, and that all the painted shows of the world on the screen of eternity are of like quality and meaning, the Mass is as real as the sunrise, and both alike may bring Joy and Peace to the heart.

When we have put aside those people who are congenitally non-religious and eternally excommunicate from the Mystery of the World, I find that Religion is natural to Man. People

without religion are always dangerous. For none can know, and least of all themselves, what volcanic eruptions are being subconsciously prepared in their hearts, nor what terrible superstitions they may some day ferociously champion. It has been too often seen.

JANUARY 1, 1915: A year is over that has held for me more of sadness and loss than any year I can well remember. And submerging all personal griefs, this year has brought the greatest catastrophe — as one is sometimes tempted to regard it — that ever befell our race; a catastrophe that even for one who may seem remote from it brings personal pain. It has not only blotted out from the lovely earth many spots that for me were loveliest, but it has cut roughly athwart — who knows for how long? — my ideals for the world and my hopes for mankind.

I cannot tell in what lurid gloom mixed with what radiant halo this year will stand out from all the years in the eyes of men alive on the earth after us. Yet we, too, are still living, and for all living things hope springs afresh from every despair. So it is that I have begun this new year at the stroke of midnight with a new kiss.

JANUARY 9: 'French and German soldiers who had fraternised between the trenches at Christmas subsequently refused to fire on one another and had to be removed and replaced by other men.' Amid the vast stream of war news which nowadays flows all over our newspapers I chanced to find that little paragraph in a corner of a halfpenny evening journal. It seems to me the most important item of news I have read since the war began.

'Patriotism' and 'War' are not human facts. They are

merely abstractions; they belong to the sphere of metaphysics, just as much as those ancient theological conceptions of Godhead and the Trinity, with their minute variations, for the sake of which once Catholics and Arians so gladly slew and tortured each other. But as soon as the sunshine of real humanity makes itself felt the metaphysics of Patriotism and War are dissipated as surely as those of theology. When you have reckoned that your enemy is not an abstraction but a human being, as real a human being as you are yourself, why want to kill him any more than you want to kill yourself? Patriotism and War are seen for what they are, insubstantial figments of fancy which it is absurd to materialise and seriously accept.

So we see, too, how simply the end of fighting might be reached. We have but to bring men together as human beings, either in imagination or in reality, and they are prepared to violate all the abstract principles of Patriotism and War, to break any rule of discipline, rather than kill one another. We see it is not much to ask. It has been achieved on a single Christmas Eve in men whose hatred of each other had been artificially excited to the highest pitch. Is it much to expect that one day this process will be extended on the world's fighting-line until so many men have 'had to be removed' that there will be none left to replace them?

JANUARY 18: Of all living creatures none has within recent years become so vastly magnified to our human eyes as the Mosquito. Once it seemed just a troublesome little pest that we carelessly crushed and looked upon as a characteristic drawback to the fascination of any hot climate. But now we know that to the Mosquito has been given a greater part on the stage of the world's human history than to any other creature. Down the minute microscopic groove of its

salivary gland, as Shipley lately puts it, 'has flowed the fluid which has closed the continent of Africa for countless centuries to civilisation, and which has played a dominating part in destroying the civilisations of ancient Greece and Rome.'

Yet there is nothing in the world that seems more fragile to us or is in reality more beautiful than the Mosquito. We have been almost as blind to the loveliness as to the deadliness of this fairy creature whose delicately alighting feet are unfelt by our rough skins. For its beauty is a function of its deadliness. Those huge emerald eyes on the dark background, those iridescent and transparent wings, the double-edged sword of its long tongue, the slender legs yet so mightily strong — all are needed to pierce swiftly and keenly and silently, with the maximum of force and of skill, the thick and heavily armoured epidermis of Man. One notes, also, that it is only the female who is equal to this achievement, for her partner is harmless to the great human beast which is the Mosquito's prey, and cultivates perforce a vegetarian diet.

So that if you would see all of Nature gathered up at one point, in her loveliness, and her skill, and her deadliness, and her sex, where would you find a more exquisite symbol than the Mosquito?

FEBRUARY 20: I sat this morning in the Old Garden. The air was soft and misty, the snowdrops and the crocuses were all opening, on every hand the bushes were bursting out into tender greenish-brown spikes, from the throats of blackbirds in the trees there came soft liquid notes, the song of serene gladness, of eternal peace. And I saw and heard and felt and knew in my heart that I was beneath the wings of the approaching Spring.

I can scarcely believe that the day will ever come of such decay of years or such desolation of spirit that I shall cease to

feel, as I feel to-day, as I have ever felt, at the approach of Spring. For it seems to me that it is something deeper than my personal joy or even my personal consciousness. It is something more profound than personality, part of the life of the world, and one with the song of the birds, which is so calmly joyous, so essentially serene, because they seem to remember the first spring of the earth and to know that when they forget it the world shall end. So it is that they can be such fine artists of Nature and leave everything out of their song save peace and joy and the eternal Recurrence of Life.

FEBRUARY 28: 'The happy character of the English,' wrote Muralt, 'is made up of a mixture of laziness and good sense.' That observation of the sagacious Swiss gentleman in his memorable *Letters* is still worth meditation, like so much else that he wrote, even after an interval of more than two centuries. Our laziness, under new conditions, may have taken on an appearance of even feverish and neurotic activity, and our good sense may sometimes have assumed strangely unrecognisable disguises, but fundamentally the English character is still marked by that happy mixture of laziness and good sense. It lies beneath such confused sort of success as we have had in the world; our love of freedom, our voluntaryism and hatred of compulsion.

To-day it explains the deep repugnance we see among us to anything like conscription in the making of our armies, even in the face of vast masses of enemies organised on that basis, and even though we have in our midst a noisy crowd of people with un-English names, Pro-Germans — to adopt the jargon of the moment — who would force on us that system of compulsory conscription which our good sense tells us must be disastrous now that we are outgrowing the days of the

press-gang. In everything we show that mixture of laziness and good sense which makes us amateurs of genius among the nations.

It is the other way with the Germans; they are marked by a mixture of industry and bad sense. They trust to laborious organisation because they have not the tact which trusts to laziness, just as the mathematical mind sometimes seems to rely on its symbols because it has not the natural instinct to reason without formulæ. To the superficial observer industry seems much better than laziness. But our English sense tells us that if industry is force it is centrifugal force, dangerous if not held in check. It was Shenstone, an Englishman, who wrote: 'Indolence is a kind of centripetal force.' Industry and bad sense may not perhaps prove the best guides to the German people.

MARCH 2: Hitherto I have always turned away from a picture of Nicholas Poussin's with disquieted feelings. I have seen its elevation of attitude, its austere independence, the admirably fine qualities of its composition — the qualities, in short, that make Poussin one of the supreme representatives of the Norman spirit — but Time has always seemed to mark his work with a harshness of colour, a frigid artificiality, a false classicality, which put Poussin away from me on an antique pedestal with the other great Norman of that age, Corneille. Not one of his pictures — and I have seen so many — has given me any satisfying vision of beauty or any enlarging thrill of joy.

But to-day I was wandering through the deserted rooms of the Grosvenor Gallery. They all seemed a Paradise. Here one was afar from the fantastic madness of the war, from all the frothy passions of the moment, among the serene and eternal realities of the world, the lovely embodiment of its

finest moments by its finest artists, never till now brought to light in a public gallery.

I chanced to come before Poussin's 'Triumph of Pan.' It is the kind of picture of pagan revelry which the grave and austere Norman so loved to paint: a vision of nymphs and fauns and satyrs and goats. But this time the great artist's inspiration has lifted him to a height from which all that in his work seemed to me defective is no longer visible; here at last is beauty and joy. The thirteen figures of the composition are wreathed harmoniously together — with that vital movement so eternal in art, one may sometimes see even in the Post-Impressionists — and each figure is yet animated by the happiest abandonment. The firm grip of the strong Norman, the compressed passion which surely lay in his heart, are here superbly fused in creative achievement. There is the wildest abandonment, and it is all held under the control of the great artist's head and eye.

So now at last I hold the clue to Poussin, and when again I approach his work I can apply the key I have found in 'The Triumph of Pan.'

GOOD FRIDAY: I wandered into the Westminster Cathedral where in the presence of the Cardinal Archbishop the Bishop of Cambusopolis — wherever that may be — was officiating at the Mass of the Presanctified. New and bare and unfurnished, this Cathedral is yet so large and open and finely proportioned, and its high altar so raised and well spaced, as one views it from afar, that the Offices of the Church seem here fittingly at home. One follows with pleasure the movements of the ritual dance executed before this devout crowd, increased, it is clear, by many Belgian refugees.

Nowadays an enlarging group of scholars find reason to

believe that Jesus never existed, and that the Gospels are a legend which may be traced to definite sources. Every detail of the story, they tell us, may be accounted for. But, for my own uninstructed part, I allow a doubt. Man, it seems to me, always likes something that once was living around which to weave the silk cocoon of his imagination, at the least some grain of plain real sand upon which to mould the delicate fantasy of his pearls, and Binet-Sanglé seems to me to present a formidable argument when he seeks to show that the details of the story of Jesus, if invented, imply a knowledge of mental pathology (of the syndrome of Cotard, to use his technical phraseology) which has only been available in recent years. Still, however we look at it, we must admit that the figure of Jesus recedes as the world grows older, until we can no longer discern whether we are gazing at the shadow cast by a suffering and pathetic idealist against the radiancy of the human imagination or at the pure flame of that imagination itself, burning in the void.

In either case how inspiring! The world is no longer presented to us as the little stage on to which suddenly rushes the bungling Playwright Himself in a wild and hopeless effort to mend the fiasco of His own actors. The universe expands and we see the soul of man rise to its own supreme rights, no longer the plaything of Gods, but itself the august creator of Gods.

And so we may find a new beauty and significance in the Mass of the Presanctified. It ceases to be the dance of the Slaves of God; it becomes the dance of the Masters of Life.

MAY 27: Our Anglo-Indians, I hear to-day from one of them, are loud in their denunciation of the peasant women of the Pas-de-Calais and the servant girls of Kent who run after Jack Sepoy and even pay for what he

gives them. The Anglo-Indians have slowly and painfully built up in India an exalted ideal of the European woman to which the Indian man is taught that he cannot aspire. Now this beautiful dream is shattered, and in their desperation our Anglo-Indians are even tempted to hope that the Indians who have learnt the truth may never return home to tell it.

But the peasant women of the Pas-de-Calais and the servant girls of Kent have their beautiful dream too, and there is room in the great heart of Nature for the one dream and the other dream.

JULY 1: We have walked to Wrington on a pilgrimage to the famous church tower, which turns out to be a large and simple and firmly organised pile without any special originality or distinction. And then, but not without some hunting, we find — removed from the cottage to which it was first affixed and now half concealed against the churchyard wall — the stone slab which states that here was born John Locke. His mother, who had come to church, being prematurely seized by the pains of childbirth, hurried out to the nearest cottage just outside the gate — long decayed and replaced by others which in their turn have grown old — and there gave birth to her immortal son.

So it was that the revolutionary thinker who created so great a panic in the Church, by sweeping away the elaborate theologically consecrated conceptions of two thousand years concerning the mind and looking at it simple and naked as it comes forth from the womb, was himself almost born in a church. That story is long past. Wrington Church so far admits its connection with one of the glories of English philosophy as to shelter within its precincts this soft slab which its flaking surface slowly renders indecipherable.

JULY 3: I have been spending a week wandering in Somerset, an altogether new region to me, between Wells and the sea. I have seen many churches and much scenery, but the two things that seem to dwell most in my memory are not of the rank of accredited sights: one the tomb and recumbent effigy of the monastic official called Camel, which lies in a corner of the church of Saint John at Glastonbury, I suppose of about the fifteenth century, a delightful piece of work to find in England; the other is the mass of fragments of highly tinted statuary that are piled up in the church of Saint Cuthbert at Wells. No record of their making seems to be extant; at all events I can find no reference to them among the numerous references to Saint Cuthbert's in the Wells Archives lately printed. It is a church of the 'Perpendicular' manner, and the statuary seems of the same age, the end of the fifteenth century or even later, the very latest Gothic age, marked by facile accomplishment and free romantic charm faintly tinged by the approaching Renaissance, the touch on them, as it were, of a provincial English Goujon. Torn down and broken years ago by Protestant zealots, here they lie neglected, piled up on window-ledges and the floor, torsoless heads and headless torsos, while the rows of niches in the transept stand empty. No guardian of this church seems ever to have troubled to call in some craftsman, possessed of knowledge and insight, to pore over these fascinating fragments, to re-read their maker's thoughts, to piece them together again in their old niches, to recapture something of their gay and variegated beauty.

It would be well worth doing. The western men, gifted with a fitting medium, worked as happily in stone as the men of the east counties in wood; and surely this array of images must have been one of their happiest final efforts.

JULY 4: The more I look at the west front of Wells Cathedral the less I like it. A belauded west front no doubt, more so, perhaps, than any in England except Peterborough. That is a mere meaningless façade, put up in a hurry by ambitious monks who were reckless of the fact that what they were putting up had no organic relation to the church behind it and was, therefore, quite false. The front of Wells is not false but it is crude and incompetent. What we see here, indeed, is not characteristically a west front at all, but just a wall, with six great buttresses projecting from it and an arcading that runs right across it below, while through this arcading, as by an afterthought, the west door has been awkwardly pierced. One thinks of the west front of many a French church, so perfectly planned and proportioned, so enchantingly beautiful; and indeed, even in England, the west front of, for instance, York is lovelier far than this of Wells. It is true that the sculpture here at Wells is fine, not to be compared with that at Chartres or at Rheims, yet as fine no doubt as anywhere in England, but it is obscurely and ineffectively arranged amid the irrelevant buttresses, hard to see, better seen by far in the photographs that illustrate the study of English Mediæval figure sculpture by Prior and Gardner.

Wells Cathedral remains a charming and interesting place, not least so by those accessory buildings which give it so remarkable an air of completeness. I come again and again to the ancient worn staircase which starts from the transept and partly winds round the Chapter House and partly goes forward to the bridge leading to the delightful Vicars' Close, where dwelt the vicars we read about in the Archives, who were so incorrigibly human, so lazy and insolent and dissipated and wanton.

JULY 11: There has been a revival of interest lately in the writings of Walter Bagehot, mainly due to the publication of his biography. It is interesting to remark among the comments of the critics who have thus been led to consider, or to reconsider, his work, the recurrence of one note: the tameness of Bagehot, his mediocrity, his inability not only to fall but to rise, his serenely limited common sense, unable to recognise the unusual and exceptional for all his common sense, his perpetual attitudes as of a Tory on the spiritual plane. The critics seem to leave Bagehot with a regretful feeling of disappointment.

I may note that in all this Bagehot was a typical man of Somerset. He was so in appearance, with his high colour and sturdy form, the representative of a dark-haired race which is scarcely Celtic but, we may suspect, older and more aboriginal, and he was equally of Somerset type in his mental make-up, the fellow-countryman of Locke and of Hobbes (highly typical, like Wren also, though both came from neighbouring Wiltshire) and of Thomas Young, of Pym and of Prynne and of Hales the 'ever memorable,' of the wonderful Roger Bacon, so daring and so insolent, and of Dunstan, if indeed he really belongs here, the most versatile as well as the most forceful of English saints. They are a sturdy people, independent to arrogance, even contentious in their caution and scepticism, determined to see things clearly and to see them for themselves, and so seeing many things that had never been seen before, yet tenacious and conservative; and Father Parsons, the last devoted martyr of the ancient faith, was a man of Somerset. They are not apt to be carried to any point of exaltation. Their most authentic poet, before Southey, is Daniel, for they are poets in the world of thought, even of science, rather than in that of emotion, but they are largely responsible for so great a figure in English literature as Fielding, and entirely, in another field, for Robert Blake,

while Dampier, alike in his strength and in his weakness, is their characteristic son. Their ideal state would seem to be a sort of Republican Toryism in life, and robust Positivism in thought.

Now this is an admirable temper of mind. It is the temper of even the greatest and sanest spirits. Is it not the temper of Rabelais and Montaigne and even Shakespeare? But those great spirits, while they stood firmly on a solid, commonplace, if you like, bourgeois foundation, instinctively sought to transmute it by the fire of passion, a rapturous eloquence, a perpetual thirst for an ideal beyond. They knew that mediocrity must be golden, they carried common sense to the point of heroism, they converted commonplace into rapture. The men of Somerset were planted stolidly enough on the threshold, but rarely passed it; only William Blake, if, as I can well believe, he belonged ancestrally to the men of Somerset (for I no longer accept the suggested and unsupported Irish ancestry), altogether dwelt in this House of Flame while yet bearing the tenacious spirit of Somerset within him, and he was born elsewhere and was most likely of a more mixed breed.

JULY 17: A thrill of joy passed through me as we drove along the beautiful road and my eye chanced to fall on the poppies in the field. It has always been so since I was a schoolboy and I suppose it always will be. A friend said sadly this spring that for her the war had taken all their beauty from the daffodils. I do not feel that, but rather the reverse. Behind the passing insanity of Man the beauty of Nature seems to become more poignant and her serene orderliness more deeply peaceful. So when men tell me how they have lived in the trenches ankle-deep in human blood, I think how Nature has shed these great drops of her pure and

more immortal blood over the green and yellow earth. And I dream lingeringly over the poppies in the corn at Merton as I went through the narrow paths on my way to school, and the incarnadined slopes of Catalonia in spring, and the rich scarlet of the large fields around the beautiful old church of Worstead, and now the soft bright red splashes that shine here to-day, as we drive among the Chiltern Hills.

To allow our vision of Nature to be disturbed by our vision of Man is to allow the infinitely small to outweigh the infinitely great. If we keep our eyes fixed on Nature, whose most exquisitely fantastic flowers — when all is said and done — we ourselves remain, how little it matters! Voltaire, as his *Micromegas* remains to testify, was wiser. Nature continues the process of her resurrections, whatever may happen to the animalcule Man.

AUGUST 8: A distinguished writer and critic is accustomed to say that all writing, however serious, must as an essential condition be 'amusing.' That is to say that it should, as he would himself probably put it, fulfil the Aristotelian demand for perpetual slight novelty. The gravest writing is thus subsumed under the same heading as the pun, which has its effect by force of the sudden surprise it occasions. Art, even when tragic, has this as its fundamental and almost physiological effect. Even the Gospels, if we enter the Kingdom of Heaven in the true child's spirit, should be divinely amusing.

This occurred to me afresh to-day when I found myself reading a serious page, which I had myself once written and half forgotten, with a perpetual slight smile. A reader of my most serious books once expressed to a friend his uncertainty as to whether I was myself aware of the humour he found in them. I am glad he felt uncertain. And if it is that same

perpetual slight smile that plays on some reader's face I suppose I should be well content.

SEPTEMBER 12: We have just passed through the loveliest week of all the year and the harvest has now at length been safely gathered in. Yet, once more, I notice the way in which some people seriously and deliberately resent the beauty of Nature when there is war among mankind. This beauty, they say, merely shows that Nature is blind and stupid and dead. Now that attitude is curious, rather pathetic, a little comic. What was it they expected?

We could understand such an attitude among the inhabitants of a mity cheese, in face of the nonchalant serenity of diners who eat cheese. We could understand it among the last representatives of the Mammoth or the Dinosaur, vaguely apprehending that with their disappearance from the earth the universe would henceforth be shrouded in gloom. But it is the peculiar privilege of Man, beyond any other animal, to look before and after, to pierce with clearer vision the many-coloured dome of his world and divine the unstained radiance beyond. In so far as he fails to do this he is still in the sub-human stage; in so far as he succeeds he is not only more human, he is nearer to the all-embracing heart of Nature. The more human we are, the better able we are to join in singing Nature's exultant song.

SEPTEMBER 21: Every act of civilisation, I read, is an act of rebellion against Nature. It is curious how this notion persists. Even exquisitely acute people, like Baudelaire, have cherished it. One need not proceed to analyse the varying ways in which men have used the word 'Nature,' for it has been done before. Yet in so far as every

act of civilisation is an act of rebellion against Nature, so is every act of Nature an act of rebellion against the Nature that went before, even from the very beginning of life. For all life is a tension of forces, an elaborately contrived device for holding natural tendencies in suspense, an interference with an existing order. Every chemical combination may be said to be a resistance to Nature, an attempt to establish an 'unnatural' stability which Nature is ever seeking to destroy, and this process is at play among all the phenomena of life. In the same way Nature created the ruminants which the carnivores slay, and Man slays them both; it is all equally 'unnatural.' Man clothes himself with skins and adorns himself with feathers that were first the clothing and the adornment of other creatures. It is all unnatural or all natural. The difference is that there the method was slowly and unconsciously developed, here swiftly and consciously. But why in that form more natural than in this?

We may say, if we like, that Unnature came into the world at the outset and has continued throughout. Or we may say, if we like, that it is all Nature. But there is no intermediate position. No doubt, for a spirit that lived in the sun or the moon, this fantastic planet, Earth, would seem radically Unnature, the sea itself, the womb of all life, would not be natural; nothing could be less natural than the birds in the air or the beasts on the land or the fishes in the sea, all occupied with their variegated devices to elude Nature as known in the sun or the moon. For my own part, I find it all Nature, alive with that adorable beauty which — rebel against it in our foolish moments as we may — Nature must in the end always hold for us. So that even before the wildest aberrations of the human imagination I still find myself of Shakespeare's mind, and murmur before every art that changes Nature, 'The art itself is Nature.'

SEPTEMBER 24: *Incessu patuit dea*, wrote Virgil. The special gait which suggests the goddess is not, indeed, nowadays, if ever, necessarily the outcome of any divine occupation, but more likely of servile duties. The possibilities of beautiful feminine gait were first revealed to me as a youth in two persons — one Cornish, the other Irish — I came across in Australia, and I recall the charming surprise of one of these, the Irishwoman with hieratic air, when I told her that I knew that as a girl she must have carried burdens on her head. When I first began to visit East Anglia, I noticed the peculiar gait of the young women, not often to be seen in a recognisable form but, it seemed to me, characteristic when found, the expression of reserved energy combined with alert vitality, a naturally rapid walk yet not hurried, with long easy strides. Just now in the dusk, here at Brandon, as we were returning to our hotel, a young woman passed with the swift large stride of this walk, its natural soft footfalls, as of a tiger which had acquired respectable businesslike habits, and yet still bore the impress of the days that were past.

One cannot but wonder in what recesses of intimate energy, or in what remote racial experiences, the secret of the idiosyncrasies of walking may sometimes lie. For this is perhaps the ancient primitive English walk, that swift walk which foreigners noted centuries ago, and were puzzled to reconcile with English indolence.

NOVEMBER 1: A charming and vivacious woman, highly intelligent, full of interest in life, came to lunch with us. A few days after, in response to an invitation, she sent a mysterious telegram of farewell. Now, a little later, we learn she has made an attempt, happily frustrated, at suicide.

My present feeling — and it is to me new and accompanied

by a sad smile — is of the youthfulness of such a proceeding. The search for Death, after all, is an index of vitality, of a vigour that has too impatiently sought to conquer the world's problems and when, for a moment, these seem too hard, rushes impulsively at Death because it knows in its heart that it is itself far too alive ever to be sought by Death.

For myself, now when the cataclysm overwhelming the world has brought to me a sense of age such as I have never had before, the search for Death becomes at the same time more alien than ever before. When life and strength seem to be ebbing away, the idea of actively courting Death grows absurd. Rather one's impulse is to remain quiet, as serene and self-possessed as may be amid the devastation around. Let Death do the courting! We may not be so hard to win, but let the chief responsibility be hers.

NOVEMBER 24: Yesterday I noticed scarcely any gulls on the sands of the bay. To-day there are thousands of them. I conclude that they arrived this morning. This is further indicated by the excitement that prevails among them. One great band flutters over the water, noisily squabbling, and more sober groups silently promenade, or stand in meditation, on the long stretch of sands. I gather that, like me, they are glad to return to their winter home from the keen war of the elements farther north. I imagine that they still cherish the faith — which also never forsakes me — that amid the soft rains of this beautiful air it is possible to cross the abyss of winter on the bridge of a rainbow.

JANUARY 4, 1916: I have been reading Herodotus for just thirty years and I am yet far from the final book of Caliope. (I still read him, as I began, in English, in the

eighteenth-century version of Beloe, which I imagine to be the best, even if not minutely accurate, just as the pretentious, commonplace, and bowdlerised translation of Rawlinson must surely be the worst.) The extreme slowness of my passage through this *Universal History* is the index of my joy in the journey. Every chapter — and how many of them there are! — seems made to linger over for the ravishment of its delicate surface, and the richness of its unplumbed depth. Herodotus is in this, indeed, more especially delightful that he combines harmoniously two opposed qualities: a beautiful naïvety of surface and beneath it a profound suggestiveness. His immensely varied wealth of detail is always interesting even for its own picturesque sake, and never trivial even when it concerns the smallest things of life, because it is always chosen by the hand of a supreme artist. But beneath it is an inexhaustible significance. All the problems of life and of knowledge are presented here, clues to all the solutions of them since devised are here to be caught at. So that no book is so rich for the student as Herodotus, so suggestive in every field. Moreover, the style of Herodotus exactly fits the vast range of his task and the twofold aspect of his mind, at once childlike artist and inquisitive philosopher. His sudden disconcerting queries, his strange silences, his faith that half dissolves into scepticism and his scepticism that almost crystallises into faith make him the most admirably truthful of historians. No one has better understood that, as Renan said, it is in a nuance that truth lies. To the narrow-minded and prosaic Greeks of his own time and to their successors in all later ages, Herodotus has been the Father of Lies, just as his successor, Pythias — the Herodotus, as we know to-day, of Northern Europe — wrongfully became the originator of romantic novels of adventure. The spirit of Herodotus brooded over the elemental, the volcanic, the mysterious, the hazardous; human nature holds all these, in their vastness

and in their smallness, so that to the degree in which we love human nature we must needs love Herodotus.

If I were in doubt as to the fascination of Herodotus I should only have to read in Thucydides. One is not called upon to question the great qualities of Thucydides, his psychological insight, his analytic grip of political life, for he is a modern and among the first of moderns. But after one has lived in the great world of Herodotus, to adjust oneself to the little world of Thucydides is not easy. Here, one feels, is the spirit of the people for whom Herodotus with his wide-ranging survey of life was simply a liar, here we are in the familiar world of high-sounding rhetoric, yet a world of concentrated and almost passionate parochialism. The virtue of Thucydides lies in his intense and penetrating vision of the political squabbles of this petty world.

With Herodotus we are lifted above provincialism into the sphere of eternity. He wrote the only first-hand history of the world that will ever be written. And he was of the heroic Greek lineage, a man of the Ionian Sea — of the tribe of Ulysses, the forerunner not only of Pythias of Marseilles but of that Posidonius whose *lost Travels* we English, as we read the vivid little fragments that alone survive, must ever regret.

JANUARY 16: Some one has brought me a spray of mimosa. I inhale its peculiar odour, not a specially delightful odour, which suggests honey and bruised leaves and, underneath, a fibrous stringiness, yet to me it brings an enlarging thrill which is endlessly delicious. At once I am transported across the gulf of forty years. I see again the Australian springtime when these gracious, drooping, golden wattles are sprinkled over the vast expanse of solitary, undulating bush in the brightsunlight. I am among them once more at the threshold of the world, still with swelling hope and tremulous fear

before the yet unopened door of Life. All the wistful, penetrating, exhilarant fragrance of youth is in this spray of mimosa.

FEBRUARY 13: The beauty of sunrise always comes to me as a new revelation, after however weary and anxious a night, and the dawn of day as the miraculous creation of a world I never saw before. In part it may be because the sunrise is less familiar to me than the sunset, and its beauty, here over the sea, much more exquisite, and therefore much more inspiring.

That is not all of it. Nor yet that we may reflect our own morning freshness on to the one scene, our own evening weariness on to the other. The one is really and naturally an inspiration, and the symbol of it, just as the other is an expiration, and the natural symbol of all expiring light and life into approaching darkness or death. The slow unveiling of the beauty of a naked and sleeping world by the increasing mighty strength of a hidden sun which at last heaves itself above the horizon to pour the vitalising glow of its beams into our blood, must needs bring a massive exhilaration of body and spirit we can scarcely else experience.

It is this same feeling on another plane which moves us with a perpetual joy as the days grow long, and chills us with a grey dread as the days grow short. These two movements are the annual diastole and systole of our earthly sphere, the World-Heart made on the pattern of the little human heart.

MARCH 21: *In coelo quies.* I used to be taken as a boy to the ancient church at Merton where the Irish vicar, unknown to fame but the most genuinely eloquent of preachers, would pour forth the extravagant flood of a sim-

ple and unrestrained emotion that never toppled over into absurdity, and his beautiful and flexible voice would breathe forth the evening prayers as though they were a new song that had never been uttered before, and from the pulpit rise with thunder that filled the twilight church and then sink to a whisper, while the Anglo-Saxon villagers sat in stolidly devout indifference, so that out of all his congregation perhaps only one truly heard, and he a little boy whose eyes would be fascinated by the old helmet suspended over the reading desk or wandering on the wall near him to the marble tablet set up by the widow of Captain Cook, or become fixed on the row in the nave vaulting of painted escutcheons, on one of which, above all, for some reason the motto appealed to him: *In coelo quies.*

In coelo quies. He knew what the words meant, but he could not know that they constitute a strange Christian motto and hold a significance deeper than any special religious faith, the last aspiration of men for whom life has been a battle, and the earth a scene of turmoil without and agitation within, as in the end life and the earth are for all of us, so that in this profound ejaculation they summed up the Vision of Rest, the Heaven which for Monk and Agnostic remains the same: *In coelo quies.*

In coelo quies. Again and again through the troubled course of life on earth, when the heart is torn by its own pain, or the pain of the hearts it loves, or the pain of the whole world, I see that escutcheon aloft, and the benediction of that old saying softly falls: *In coelo quies.*

MARCH 30: A woman has shown me a crude and unpleasant letter written to her by a man I had (with perhaps too much forgetfulness of psycho-analytic doctrine) imagined to be refined, and he has defended him-

self with the plea that 'to the pure all things are pure.' It is perhaps not an uncommon experience.

'To the pure all things are pure.' It may be the truth. But I sometimes wish Saint Paul had stated that hazardous truth in another form and declared that to the impure all things are impure.

The sea receives much filth into its broad bosom, and beneath the vital action of sun and wind and a pervading antiseptic salinity, it is all transmuted into use and beauty and the invigorating breath of ozone. But some narrow and enclosed minds are not so much like the sea as like the sewer. I object to the sewer pretending to a virtue which is the prerogative of those minds only which are like the sea.

MAY 21: This is the first day of the new 'Summer Time,' a bright and hot morning when every one may well rejoice at an excuse for getting up an hour earlier. Yet only the pressure of war has induced us to adopt that excuse so simple, merely to put one's watch an hour ahead. Too simple it seems to the more misoneistic among us, who grumble and protest, whose consciences revolt against this arbitrary, artificial, untruthful, dishonest, immoral interference with the Course of Nature. In the House of Lords, the solid bulwark of our misoneism, for good or for evil, it has been pointed out that of twins born in the early hours of this morning the second may become the first-born, and where would the sacred rights or primogeniture be then? The sheep-like majority of less stout-hearted opponents has followed more meekly the line of least resistance.

Let us hope it may be a helpful demonstration to them of the fact that Life is built up on Conventions and Illusions. Even Time, we see, comes within the category. We had but to say Let there be light! and there was light. It may, how-

ever, have been as well that the minority so stoutly opposed that exercise of creative will, for we should not be too easily conscious of our Conventions and our Illusions. We must always accept them solemnly, as the Confucian accepts solemnly his beautiful and profound conception of the Moral World as based on Ceremony and Music.

JUNE 21: It is good to leave behind all the passionate and pathetic problems of war to find refuge for a few days in Saffron Walden. The north-western and most remote corner of Essex which Saffron Walden dominates is now outside the great main tracks, and an insignificant branch line serves all its railway needs. But it is yet the capital town of a district which from the earliest historic and even prehistoric times has been found desirable among the forests and marshes which covered the region around, and many successive populations — Britons and Romans and Saxons and Normans — have left their mark here and helped to build up this ancient and interesting town. So it is that Saffron Walden stands like a little metropolis, full of archæology and history and beauty, which is cherished with a local patriotism nowadays rare to find in English towns.

The special note of Walden is well struck in its Museum, which stands in the grounds between its splendid church and the mound associated with the last fragments of its Castle. In this fascinating place — surely the best Museum to be found in any small English town — we have spent hours of enjoyment each day. Here we have discussed the problems aroused by the Saxon skeletons and their ornaments, have learnt better to understand flint instruments, have delighted in the East Anglian's art in wood as compared with the florid vigour of the Femish panels also placed here; we have become more intimate with our ancestors through seeing the

wall decorations they lived with; we have gazed at the charming frieze of the house where Gabriel Harvey spent his obscure old age, at the gauntlet which Mary of Scots gave to the Master of Fotheringay on the day she died, at the waistcoat of William Pitt. When at last the versatile and accomplished Curator, who has given to his unknown visitors so much of his precious time (for he is occupied in making the Museum, what it should be, a living educative centre), accompanies us to the door on the hour of closing, 'You were speaking of Flemish art,' he remarks; 'if you stand by the wall here you will hear the guns in Flanders.' We stood silent, and in a moment or two, when we had learnt how to direct our attention, we heard — or, rather, we felt — the repeated thuds of those death-dealing guns one hundred and fifty miles away.

So it is that we are swiftly brought back again from the glad problems of the past to the sad problems of the present. And inevitably one thinks of the days to come when these 'battles long ago' will have taken their serene little place in the Museum, among the other 'old forgotten far-off things.'

JUNE 22: As we walk through the long village street of Great Chesterford — famous as an important military post which has yielded interesting vestiges of Roman occupation — I note that a little old inn at the farther end is kept by one Walter Whitman. It is a little startling to see that familiar name in so unfamiliar an environment. I recall that the Emersons (as Dr. Emerson, the historian of the family, has in recent years found reason to conclude) came from Saffron Walden, four miles away, and on enquiring we find that the Whitmans have long been settled here, the inn itself having been built by a Whitman, who in an unusual but Whitmanian spirit has left a 'Song of Himself' on the front wall in the large bold letters, 'R.I.W. 1792.' Was he related to the Joseph

Whitman, Walt's earliest-known ancestor, who came from England some century and a half earlier and is found settled in New England by 1655? Ralph Waldo Emerson was the first to recognise with hearty generosity the genius of Walt Whitman, and it would be pleasant to think that when his ancestor Thomas Emerson left England in 1635 he was accompanied by his friend and neighbour, Joseph Whitman.¹

JUNE 29: I have been to the funeral of an aged friend at a crematorium in South London. It was conducted according to the rites of the English Church by the chaplain attached to the cemetery, and I was interested to see how those rites would be adapted to the special requirements of a funeral by cremation, which I have never witnessed before.

The wreath-burdened coffin was set down near folding doors, and the cheerful hearty parson mounted a rostrum and in a full round voice, without once moving from his post, went straight through the whole Office, but with one highly important change: he omitted the address 'Forasmuch' appointed at the graveside when the coffin is lowered into the earth. As the swift vocal stream equably flowed — but apparently at no fixed point in the stream — a black-robed verger appeared and quietly pushed the coffin through the folding doors which opened and then closed behind him, so imperceptibly that the principal mourners never even saw this part of the service. Then, when the Benediction was reached, the chaplain, having performed his duty — a gram-

¹ The vicar was subsequently kind enough to look the matter up in the Registers of the Parish, and found that the name Whitman first appears in 1749; so that Joseph Whitman can scarcely have come from Great Chesterford, though he may possibly have belonged to the district, for in the early seventeenth century, I have ascertained, there were Whitmans in Hertfordshire as well as in Norfolk.

ophone might have done as much — skeltered out of the chapel and the mourners were free to disperse.

No doubt the world will continue to subsist, rites or no rites. Yet as long as rites are carried out — and that will be very long — they should at least be fitting and beautiful rites. Whether a man makes it his business to lay bricks or to say prayers, there is a right way and a wrong way. It is best that he should exercise his finest skill and intelligence in discovering the right way. This man to-day has been faced by the problem of adapting a rite which was beautifully fitted to burial by inhumation to burial by fire, and all that he can think to do is to throw away exactly that portion of the rite which is the core of the whole Office.

The priest is indeed here for nothing else but to bid, with all the authority of his sacred function, a solemn and auspicious Farewell to the Dead at the moment of entering the grave, that Charon's boat which is to carry him to a far and unknown shore. At this moment, when about to pass for ever from human eyes and human fellowship, the dead brother or sister was directly addressed for the last time by the priest, who stooped to cast earth three times on the Departed. It is true that the original rite has been modified, so that the priest's Address is now made to the bystanders who also are now left to cast in the earth. These are changes in the rite that ought never to have been made, for they seriously impair its dramatic beauty and its symbolic significance. But to omit the Address altogether, and to let fall every symbolic act, is to eviscerate the rite.

Why should it be forgotten that fire and flame, as the Church has always known, are at least as fit for symbolic ends as earth? The priest has but to say when he reaches the Address: 'We therefore commit his body to the Fire, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' with one hand placed on the coffin as he accompanies it through the folding doors to the furnace

and then returns to the mourners to complete the Office, uttering as he reappears the words next following: 'I heard a voice from Heaven.' Thus, with the slightest and most obvious change, the Anglican order for the Burial of the Dead could be adapted to the Cremation of the Dead with a heightening rather than an impairment of its fitting beauty. It is difficult to believe that a Church with any vital energy could so disregard what it holds to be the chief business of a Church, the Ordering of Rites.

JULY 8: 'We saw the Germans coming up from the exits of a dugout and tearing off down the trench. Our platoon commander got into the trench and picked the Huns off as they came out. He had a mouth of the dugout on either side of him. A Hun would rush out of No. 1 exit — over he went. Then one from No. 2 and over he went. Our officer was as cool as a cucumber; he simply turned from right to left and fired as if he was in a Shooting Saloon.' It is the platoon sergeant telling a journalist for to-day's paper of the recent British assault at Montauban.

Here they are at work, all the purifying and regenerating virtues of war, over which Hegel and Moltke and Treitschke grew rapturous, in actual operation at last. Those distinguished Germans might regret they had not foreseen that, as on this occasion, such grand virtues might sometimes be monopolised by an enemy. My own regret is that the Englishman had not been permitted to acquire them in what the sergeant evidently thought the most fitting place, the Shooting Saloon.

JULY 9: Amid all the un-English Reactionary measures which flourish in the war-fevered England of to-day, however apt they may be to arouse one's indignation or one's contempt, I cannot sometimes help feeling a certain mischievous pleasure.

I observe how, after our English voluntary system has triumphantly created great armies, Welshmen and Irishmen and Scotchmen, with a few violently patriotic 'Englishmen' bearing mysteriously barbarous and unfamiliar names, rush on to the scene to gather in the handful of more or less incompetent men yet left as an anticlimax to enforce the lesson of English voluntarism. Every compulsionist is a coward (for that is why he is a compulsionist, he cannot believe in the freedom of courage), and it is just as well that he should show himself so, meanly and pettily, pursuing the Englishmen of freer and sturdier spirit, pioneers of our civilisation who will be lashed into a nobler spirit of freedom by this spectre of compulsion. I observe, too, how nowadays Folly, which had lurked so long in its gloomy official caverns in Whitehall or elsewhere, stalks abroad unabashed, to exhibit its insolent face in the unlikeliest places, so that henceforth we may know it for what it is.

It is a fine sowing time, the Devil scattering tares that look like wheat, while wheat also is scattered that looks like tares. And I smile as I seem to hear the Mills of God already grinding.

OCTOBER 14: 'As though the emerald should say, "Whatever happens I must be emerald."' From of old that saying of Marcus Aurelius has been in my thoughts, and now, as the tide of life recedes and I am left more and more alone, it has sunk deeper than ever and even becomes endeared.

One may ask: Why cherish the virtue of a mere stone, as it were a pebble cast up on the shore? The virtue of vitality lies in response, in a perpetual internal adjustment to external changes. The virtue of the emerald is for living things death.

Yet, on the other hand, all the progress of life towards its highest forms is by increased stability and greater fixity. It is the lower forms of life which yield to a touch and adapt themselves to every wind of influence. All high life is associated with increased inhibition by the higher centres over the irritable autonomic system. It is the lower human beings in whom response is so easy and so swift.

So like the magnet that is held towards the north, I am fixed in continuous vital tension towards my Polar Star. 'As though the emerald should say: "Whatever happens I must be emerald."'

NOVEMBER 12: I see that an able publicist, of Pacifist tendency, writes to the papers to protest against the establishment of any international organisation to ensure peace. He is an advocate of international peace, but the idea that there should be any organised force to ensure peace revolts him.

But is he proposing to abolish the local policeman? I feel complacently sure of my own moral rectitude. I feel convinced that when I walk along my street I shall not assault my neighbour or pick his pocket. But I do not object that a policeman should be strolling along the footpath, for, however conscious of my own moral rectitude, I am not conscious of my neighbour's. In fact I have serious suspicions about him. Therefore I view with satisfaction the presence of that policeman, who need not concern himself with my doings, but is, I trust, keeping an eye on my neighbour.

Now my relation to my neighbour may be extended and

generalised to all the people in my street. It may be pushed further to include all the people in my parish, still further to apply to the whole city, beyond that to the county, to the whole country, to the continent to which my country is adjacent, and finally to the whole world.

We are all agreed as to the principle and method which should be adopted to keep the peace between me and my neighbour, and that it should be extended to the whole group of my neighbours. But why are there people so dense as not to see that there is no limit to that extension? Whether we are dealing with a group of two people or of two hundred million people, we are alike dealing with individuals, moved by the same interests and the same passions. The only difference is that the larger groups are still more potent for evil because here the devastating facts of crowd-psychology come into play. Whatever fancy names you give to the larger groups, there is nothing sacrosanct about them; they remain groups of individuals. If you can dispense with the policeman for your small group of individuals, well and good, I am delighted to hear it. If you cannot dare to dispense with the policing of the small groups, still less can you dare to do it for those larger and infinitely more dangerous groups which call themselves nations.

But: *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Always remember to see to it that those guardians are themselves guarded.

NOVEMBER 30: I hear that Sir Hiram Maxim is dead. That news recalls to mind my only personal impression of the man to whom we owe the deadliest of all the deadly machines which are now destroying the populations of Europe.

It was more than thirty years ago and we stood around Maxim as he explained the mechanism of his gun and de-

monstrated its marvellous qualities. I still see the mild and childlike air, so often marking the man of inventive genius, the modest yet well-satisfied smile, with which he deftly and affectionately manipulated his beautiful toy. As we looked on, one of us asked reflectively: 'But will not this make war very terrible?' 'No!' replied Maxim confidently. 'It will make war impossible!'

So it is the dreamers, the children of genius, who for thousands of years have been whispering into the ears of Mankind that insidious delusion: *Si vis pacem para bellum*. Even the brilliant inventor who in the dawn of the Metal Age first elongated the useful dagger-like knife into the dangerous sword was doubtless confident that he had made war impossible.

DECEMBER 8: As I lay this morning, traversing with aching head a worn path of anxious thought, there suddenly flashed before my mind, out of all apparent connection with my thoughts, the momentary vision of a landscape which can scarcely ever have appeared in memory since I last saw it forty years ago: a rough and deserted log-hut, of no beauty or interest or any slightest personal association, among scattered trees in the Bush some twenty miles from Carcoar, on the other side of the world. It never attracted my interested attention when I sometimes passed it, always with a book in my hand, I never paused to examine it, there was no reason why it should ever again recur to memory after my twelve months' stay in that neighbourhood ended. And now, by some inexplicable chance, the swift ploughshare of consciousness for one brief moment throws up to the surface of the brain this trivial and minute relic of the far past.

What infinite riches in a small room! What innumerable forgotten visions of the world stored away among the convolutions of a few ounces of watery tissue! My days are spent with

the past. And into the never-ending procession of significant memories there enters this vain image — holding, or not, some latent associated symbolism — out of the depths of a reservoir that can never be measured or exhausted.

JANUARY 21, 1917: One seeks painfully to gather together such shreds of benefit as may be found by searching among the wreck of war. There seems to be one such thread, helpful for life and for literature, in an increased courage to face facts and an increased daring to express them. The official war films of the front present to the Cinema public, in at all events some degree of naked reality, pictures which it would have been impossible to present before. That is characteristic of a general change of attitude. People are not ashamed to think about all sorts of things they never acknowledged they thought about before, and they say all sorts of things which before they were much too prudish to say, or to allow any one else to say.

This is on the credit side of the War account. Not that the coarseness of vulgarity is a gain in literature or in life. On the contrary, it is a deadly loss from which we have long been suffering. For it sadly happens that base minds have the power of smearing with their own filth the words which stand for lovely things. By their action literature and life become degraded for us all. It needs sensitive, supple, and pure minds to preserve the words which stand for sacred things, and to carry forward that widening and deepening of human experience in which the life of literature consists. But it also needs minds that are strong and daring. Let us be thankful if the War is helping men—it is perhaps the only way in which it can help literature — to a little more courage.

FEBRUARY 26: For several mornings in succession I have been awakened just before dawn by a mouse gnawing on the farther side of the wainscot. In the deep silence the crunching of his incisors fills the air, and mighty jaws seem to be tearing away what sound like huge splinters. As I lie in a half-dreaming state listening to his tormenting activities, imagination involuntarily suggests to me gratifying pictures of the tortures which ought to be inflicted upon him.

Yet I sometimes wonder what may be the psychic state of my mouse who seeks so persistently and so fruitlessly to penetrate the mystery of his universe at that particular point. Surely his fellows must shake their heads and seek to persuade him, at all events by their own sagacious practical example, that probably nothing is there but Infinite Wood. And all the time there lurks in my mouse's mind the germ of the intuition that things are not what they seem; that Something lies behind phenomena.

So I grow reconciled with my tormenting mouse, for I reflect that he is inaugurating that metaphysical attitude of mind which after long æons becomes consciously and deliberately embodied in the philosophy of a Kant.

MARCH 24: I recall, many years ago, in the train from Paris to Calais, an awkward elderly obviously distressed Englishman, with a French newspaper in his hand though he evidently knew no French. At length, without a word, he thrust the paper into the hands of two young Frenchmen sitting near him and pointed to a paragraph. They read it gravely and handed it back as sympathetically as their ignorance of English permitted. I gathered from their remarks that an English jockey had been killed on a French racecourse. This was evidently his father, summoned to Paris, and now returning after the funeral. There was something

so pathetic, so childlike, in the grief that thus blindly craved for sympathy, the little picture has always remained clearly printed on my memory.

I think now that, however socially repressed, that represents the natural human instinct. When the ache of grief is at the heart, well-bred friends avoid with care anything that might touch on the subject of grief. They dread lest they might open a scarcely healed wound or, as they may quaintly put it, recall painful memories, and we also are too well-bred to obtrude our sorrow. But we are all children at heart, and the vision of my drab, awkward, grief-stricken, childish, old fellow-passenger now comes back to my mind.

APRIL 8 — EASTER SUNDAY: When the first breath of spring is felt in the air, always there comes into my blood the impulse to pack my bag, to start for afar, to wander in some new and beautiful land, among some strange and attractive folk, to celebrate the Easter resurrectional festival of the earth's new life which may well be the oldest of human religious rites. For three years the gates of the outer world have been closed to me. Three years ago, to-day, I stood beneath the rich loveliness of the windows of Rheims and could scarcely leave them, drawn to that now veiled shrine of beauty, for the first and last time, by what premonition of tragedy. For the whole world has been revolutionised since, left naked and poorer, as I, too, have been left. Now as I listen dreamingly to music there seems to arise once more within me some impulse from the past, the old call of the palmer's scrip, the old desire of the pilgrim's staff. But when I turn and consider, I know that it is not the old call nor the old desire. I seem to be conscious of some vaster pilgrimage that I can but dimly discern. 'When thou wast young,' I seem to hear, 'thou girdest thyself and walked whither thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old!'

MAY 20: 'She corrupted him from beyond the grave.' Those words of Flaubert's concerning Charles Bovary have always seemed to me to reveal a profound insight, and now they come back to me afresh. Not indeed that they are to be accepted only in their narrow meaning. That Emma Bovary was a destructive rather than a constructive element at work on her weak husband was merely an accident of his nature and of hers. The more fundamental fact is the power, the heightened power, which those whom we love possess when they are dead. It is a power which is increased rather than diminished by the length of time we have known them. During that time an infinite number of new delicate fibres have grown in the brain, of new associational anastomoses with old fibres, of nuclei of latent explosive energy. We felt them during the life of the person who determined their growth, now and again, pleasurably or painfully, but on the whole scarcely consciously at all. But the irrevocable fact of death at once causes an acute activity in their vast and complex organism. All the fibres that for the most part lay latent or functioned automatically become throbbingly sensitive, and awake to tortured consciousness at a touch. And these touches are unceasing. At every moment there is some circumstance in the outer life, some impulse in the inner life, that strikes one of these nerves, evoking a prolonged vibration which absorbs all the being. We realise that we are caught in a net, from which there is no escape, for it is a net which is made of the substance of all our experience and woven with the fibres of all our brain. Now that net has come to life and is drawn around us and is pressing us with a subtle but irresistible force, corrupting us from beyond the grave, or exalting us into the finest shapes our nature may take.

MAY 26: After long years I lie once more on the daisied grass by the lake in this delicately made corner of Man's earth. Against a background of blue sky, and the mingled songs of birds, and green repose, and radiant blossoming, at this loveliest moment of the year, I see, under the trees afar, the little groups as of Watteau's *Fêtes Champêtres*, but can scarcely see their modern sandwiches and thermos flasks, nor hear their Cockney chatter. Once more I have inhaled, so far as one may in this northern clime, the fragrance of the magnolias, the fragrance that haunted me forty years ago on the other side of the world, and brooded over the cloudy violet fields of bluebells, and revelled in the flaming splendour of the azaleas, insolent in their Chinese perversity, as though their rare leaves were flowers, and their profuse flowers mere leaves.

Yet all the time my thoughts have been less with the flowers than with women I once wandered and lingered with here among them, dear women who felt the beauty of the world with a keen inexpressible ecstasy, the birthright, maybe, of those who are fated to leave it too soon. All around are spots endeared to me for ever because burdened with the memory of some playful mood, some daring gesture, some hour of sweet or serious converse. Whether they are happier who are at rest, I ask myself, or I who wander and linger here alone, yet not alone, since the memory of their rapture remains to sharpen my sad joy.

JUNE 2:

The West winds for a while delay;
 The dark boughs shiver overhead;
 Let no light daffodil betray
 Us to forgetfulness of our dead.

The anthropocentric fallacy seems still strong at the heart

of our poetasters (one need not use the name in any offensive sense), and I never cease to resent it. If we are to insist that Nature must reserve her supreme sympathy for Man — Man who of all creatures has most outrageously violated her! — surely we may rather imagine her as seeking to console his sorrow by beauty than as desiring to heighten his bitterness by rigour.

But what is Man anyhow that Nature should be mindful of him? There has not in fact been even coincidence to flatter the fallacy this year, for the belated spring has broken out at last in an incomparable efflorescence of splendour. Let us be glad! It were no comfort for Nature to turn all a plumed hearse for my grief. Let me rather drink of all the heavenly joy that she can give and learn, if I can, to merge personal loss in that impersonal flame of glory which for ever burns up the pains and dross of life, of all life and not alone of our human life. Even our poetasters themselves, whom the agony of the time has called into being, belie their own faith, and the fragments of song they shed abroad, their brilliant half-formed flowers, are mere faint symbols of Nature, a new incarnation of her purificatory process.

JUNE 7: Life seems to me now mostly a dream. It is a common saying and I use it in the common way, for the men who have said it forgot that in dreaming life seems anything but a dream and we agonise and argue against some oppressing fate that in our waking moments we might approach with more fortitude. Life to-day seems to me a dream that, as is not the case in dreams, I know to be a dream.

The world is warm and lovely on this half-forsaken Kentish coast. The old houses charm one with their reminiscent Flemish gables, the hawthorn blooms in vigorous luxuriance as if to comfort us a little for the laburnums that fade and fall; this

eastern sea, that is always dull let the sun shine as it will, is lit up here and there by luggers with rich red-brown sails that rejoice my soul, and over it hang always, as once for Rossetti at Birchington not far away, the heavy mists in the offing, 'awearied with all their wings'; everything here has its own beauty, a deep inner human beauty, so unlike the aerial beauty of my extinguished Paradise of the West.

Gay dragon-fly aeroplanes swiftly hum across the sky, flashing silver in the sun. And now and again, perhaps towards evening, the siren hoots its warning along the coast and incandescent gleams send their signal from the sea, and soon swiftly breaks out the roar of anti-aircraft guns against invisible raiders, and however anti-militant one may be, a wave of exhilaration surges up within at the possibly impending danger, the certain clash of death close at hand.

Yet, more often here, my eyes seem to swim and dream in tears. For me, too, as for so many others, two worlds seem dead, an outer world across the Channel that I shared with my fellows and an inner that my own heart held. In these two lines of coast an old circle of memories in which for me both these worlds once moved comes to sensitive life again. I look across towards Ostend, pounded perhaps to death by our great bombarding guns, which boom now and again, till they seem to strike the ground I stand on, and I think of happy days when I wandered along its broad front and saw the splendid sun over the western sea towards my England, and I think of eager little feet that will never trip along that front again. And it is not so much I that dream, but the world itself that has become a dream of dead pasts while I who live have yet no life for any new dream. So to me, too, in the end there comes home the foolish and haunting echo —

And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.

JULY 2: Years ago, when I dwelt in the Temple, I would walk up and down the Embankment between Charing Cross and Blackfriars, never weary of contemplating that lovely and slowly shifting scene as the magic fairyland of twilight passed into the deeper beauty of night. But in those days one's vision had always to exercise a certain selection; to lose oneself in the exhilaration of that loveliness one had to be voluntarily blind to elements of tawdry vulgarity and glare.

To-night once more after many years I came along the Embankment between eleven and midnight. It was a perfect night, with soft and lucent air and a large moon that silvered the rippling water. For the first time I saw all the loveliness complete which before I had by an effort partly to divine. Every vulgar note, every glaring tone, had altogether gone. Everywhere harmony, everything standing nobly in the deep perspective of its own proper light, with an enthralling power of calm and solemn beauty. Here Nature and Man have clasped hands in a dream of ecstasy. I can recall no such magnificent vision anywhere in the world. To think that we owe it to the agony of the world!

OCTOBER 20: The moonlight nights in London during the last four days, with the subdued artificial light giving full value to the light of Nature, have been of rare beauty. They have recalled to me, as nearly as London nights can, the moonlight night which always remains in memory as the loveliest I ever knew in England, the night on the slope at Hindhead when Tennyson lay dying close by at Haslemere. But there is a difference which a while ago we could scarcely even have conceived. The serene October moonlight at Haslemere was a fitting background to a poet's departure from the scene of life. But this London October moonlight is the surprising *décor de théâtre* of a different play

never before produced. Just now it is performed by night, and even in this short run it has already fallen into a smooth methodical order, creditable, no doubt, to all concerned. The preparations begin at six. It is then that notices are sent along the streets, and the large cars and vans begin to draw up in front of the Police Station opposite to which I live. A little later a sheep-like flock of people begin to hurry into the Station, which seems able to swallow down an incredible number into its cellars, in this theatre functioning as the Pit. Meanwhile the preparations continue to be carried on, quite calmly but with all promptness. An inspector whistles, calls out a man's name and the name is passed along; immediately a car drives up to the gates and departs on its mission. Then a dozen or two special constables leap swiftly up into a van provided with benches for the present purpose and are whirled away; in a few minutes the van has returned and another dozen or two specials leap up with the like swiftness and are in their turn carried away. The streets are now clearing, with the stimulus of sharp injunctions from the police. By eight o'clock I begin to hear, far away, scarcely distinguishable, the gentle throbbing of guns. It slowly draws nearer. One sees now their lightning flashes. Then they are joined by guns which must be close by. There is now a confused din, rising and falling, of guns which seem to be of the most various kind and calibre. At times a rocket may be seen in the sky, but otherwise there is little to observe. The streets are now completely clear and silent. There is only that dominating confused din of the guns, and if amid it there is any explosion of falling bombs it is hard to distinguish. There is, however, an ambulance in action. One feels disinclined now to read or to write. I lie down on my couch, and under the hypnotic action of the gun-fire I fall into an almost unconscious and dreamlike state, though remaining perfectly awake. Then I become aware of men talking below in the otherwise deserted street, and on ris-

ing and going to the window I see a little group of specials and a man — it is not clear in the gloom whether he, too, is one of them — is holding forth dogmatically on the science of air-raiding; he has made a special study of the raids; he declares with conviction that he has discovered the exact path followed by the invaders, which he proceeds to describe, for he knows it, 'every bloody inch of it.' I scarcely gather that his hearers are meekly convinced of his superior knowledge, but they refrain from discussing the matter and the little group disperses. Then another group of performers enters the scene to play its appointed part, and I hear, beautiful, sustained in the air, the musical whirr as of a huge tuning-fork. Somehow it reminds me of the Prelude to *Lohengrin* and the angelic choir bearing the Holy Grail. In a few minutes this supernal music has died away. The heavenly choir having scattered the benediction of their Grail over the Great City are bearing it back to their own Paradise.

That was the climax of the whole play. In a little while the guns, which had already receded into the distance, suddenly stop. The performance is over. The Pit across the road discharges its vast audience. The old everlasting stream is once more flowing and bubbling along the streets, with gay laughter and rippling exhilarated speech.

CHRISTMAS DAY: The great recurring Festivals of the Year, each one more than the last, like the tolling of a bell, remind me how I am nearer than ever before to the last stroke of midnight, the final rhythmic flutter of the swallow's wing. Often recurs to memory the saying of the pagan Anglo-Saxon chief that we know no more of our life than that it is like the flight of a swallow which enters the hall at one end and passes out at the other. Only to me — who love the open air, and to see the world from a height, and to

dream — it is not quite so that I picture my swallow's flight. Rather I seem to be taking my course from unknown mists to unknown mists over the clear lake in the valley below upon which all the shows of life are mirrored. When I set out the lake all lay before me and my dreams were ever of the life I seemed to see mirrored ahead. But now there is little to see before me, and all my dreams, beautiful or sad, are no longer of the future but of the past, that is receding into the mist now fast swallowing the whole scene.

JANUARY 8, 1918: I notice a tendency among some of the younger painters and artists of to-day to become aggressive on behalf of Art. Militarism is in the air and they will fight for their cause. They write to me of the New Crusade they wish to initiate, and of the battle they are about to wage on behalf of Art against Science, which they imagine to be the Enemy.

Yet Militarism, as even these same people admit, has to-day been once more proved a failure in Life. Is it necessary even to argue that it must be a failure in Art? You may thrust Art fiercely down the throats of children at the point of a spiritual sword, but spiritual sword and spiritual food will alike be rejected by those tender stomachs. The last state of Art thus championed would be worse than the first.

No doubt Art is neglected, as also Science is neglected, for they are twins, born under the same star. No doubt, also, the artist is neglected, even most neglected when most original, when most himself. But if he thinks of himself and his own neglect he ceases to be an artist, and becomes a tradesman, an excellent thing to become, no doubt, but certainly a different thing. For the artist is a lover, as the man of science is a lover, and is even prepared to say with Goethe's lover, 'If I love thee, what is that to thee?'

The great artist, like the great lover, demands, moreover, a certain solitude for the exercise of his vocation. He flings by the wayside, as he goes, the lovely things he has made, as he that casteth his bread on the waters. But the artist's creations, unlike Nature's flowers which fade and are trampled because they are renewed every year, can never fade, nor may the trampling of any feet destroy them utterly. They will be found after many days, like that jewel a queen dropped from the castle walls, even after many centuries, to be treasured of men thenceforth for ever.

JANUARY 14: It has come to me of late that of those unknown vivid and flaming personalities that are here and there born into the world — village Hampdens, mute inglorious Miltons, women who have never found expression in art or in life — there are perhaps none that are wholly lost.

Millions are born and live and die like the leaves in a forest; they fade and fall and crumble away, even in the memories of those who knew and loved them best. But a few have existed here and there who lived so originally or so fervently that their fellows who knew them, or divined their secret, marked and could never forget. So these never faded and fell and crumbled in human memories like the others but entered the human tradition, and live for evermore, in however transformed a shape, in myth and folklore and religion, subtly inspiring influences of which the originating persons have been in name forgotten, and yet they live on for ever in the life of the world, tiny indistinguishable rays in the great flame of life.

So at all events I love to think it is, when I remember how I have been inspired or helped by the secretly burning originality of some unknown person.

FEBRUARY 9: In one of my books I had occasion to mention the case, communicated to me, of a woman in Italy, who preferred to perish in the flames when the house was on fire, rather than shock her modesty by coming out of it without her clothes. So far as it has been within my power I have always sought to place bombs beneath the world in which that woman lived, so that it might altogether go up in flames. To-day I read of a troopship torpedoed in the Mediterranean and almost immediately sunk within sight of land. A nurse was still on deck. She proceeded to strip, saying to the men about her, 'Excuse me, boys, I must save the Tommies.' She swam around and saved a dozen of them. That woman belongs to my world. Now and again I have come across the like, sweet and feminine and daring women who have done things as brave as that, and even much braver because more complexly difficult, and always I feel my heart swinging like a censer before them, going up in a perpetual fragrance of love and adoration.

I dream of a world in which the spirits of women are flames stronger than fire, a world in which modesty has become courage and yet remains modesty, a world in which women are as unlike men as ever they were in the world I sought to destroy, a world in which women shine with a loveliness of self-revelation as enchanting as ever the old legends told, and yet a world which would immeasurably transcend the old world in the self-sacrificing passion of human service. I have dreamed of that world ever since I began to dream at all.

FEBRUARY 10: The more I listen to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony the more vividly it presents itself to me as the most subtly complete embodiment he ever attained of his own personal conception of life as sublimated self-assertion. At the outset of the first movement, 'Fate knocks at the

door,' said Beethoven himself. But the door was not immediately opened. We hear the challenge of Life to the yet reluctant soul, not yet feeling the energy to assert itself in the world. So far the gospel of assertion is preached from outside to the self which accepts it indeed but has not yet acquired the will-power to embody it and live it. That explains perfectly the beautiful slow movement. That movement sets forth the message of impersonal joy and self-sacrifice which is the gospel of all the Children of Heaven in music from Bach to Franck. But to Beethoven, who is not of the Gods but the Titans, it sounds infinitely sad; it seems mere renunciation and resignation, for it is the death of the truculent self, and comes as it were a seductive temptation to his weakness to abandon that faith in the triumph of the self which is Beethoven's Credo. And he succeeds slowly in shaking off the temptation. He wins his way to the gospel which had challenged him at the outset. Now at last he gains the strength to embody it, to take it up into his blood and spirit, so that henceforth it is affirmed to the end with ever more triumphant energy, the most complete and magnificent affirmation of ruthless self-assertion that has been heard in music, and the supreme expression of Beethoven's own personality.

The interpretation may seem astray and fantastic. It is how I hear the Symphony in C Minor. And it corresponds to all that we know of Beethoven, who, let us never forget, was even more than Milton, 'of the Devil's party without knowing it.'

FEBRUARY 17: Grieg's Pianoforte Concerto I would call the Marriage Concerto, not so much because he wrote it at the time of his marriage, but because that seems to me its subject. It is, no doubt, scarcely a profound work, but a tone of golden beauty is maintained throughout, it is always

pleasant to listen to, and now I find in it this concealed meaning.

The first movement is all love, the representation of the lover's joyous emotion at the prospect of union, and it culminates in a description of the act of union. I scarcely know — others, doubtless, may be wiser — how the sexual embrace could be more beautifully and precisely rendered in music. The *Adagio* presents the next stage, in which the lovers, now united, face together the problems of love and life and realise their meaning; there is no sadness in this movement, only sweetness and a sense of gravity, the hesitating contemplation of the unknown course in front. In both these movements the attitude may be regarded as subjective; in the final movement it becomes more objective. The task of life is seen and accepted, to be carried on with joy and ever-increasing vigour, fortified by the sense of union in love. It is this sense of union in love for the sake of work which seems to inspire the whole Concerto with a beautiful unity.

F^{EBRUARY 24:} There seems to me a certain parallelism and a certain contrast between Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony — a nobler work than the better-known Sixth too heavily laden with unclarified emotion. I am not concerned with any questions of technique outside my competence, nor with any attempt to place the two works on the same plane of importance. I view them as revelations of their respective makers' inner self, each here revealing that self in its happiest normal phase. Both symphonies, it seems to me, deal with life as a Personal Problem, both follow a similar order, and both end joyously and triumphantly. But within this common scheme, how immense the contrast in temper and outlook! The symphonies start in a rather similar mood. Tchaikovsky, like

Beethoven, is challenged by Life, and the challenge affects him oppressively, mournfully. It is in the *Andante* which follows that one seems to feel the profound difference between the aggressive muscular Beethoven and the yielding feminine Tchaikovsky. The voice of beauty, that comes to the one as a seduction to weakness which must be repelled, comes to the other as a message of consolation which encourages and sustains. It is this contrast of attitude which differentiates the whole tone of the work. So it comes about that the *Andante* leads on naturally and by no revulsion to a mood of exalted light-heartedness which is yet serious. This yielding and feminine Tchaikovsky, we see, is not stimulated to energy, like the robust and ascetic Beethoven, by rebellion against the seduction of beauty; he can only attain to equanimity and strength by accepting the consolation of beauty. It is all of profound psychological interest. We see, too, incidentally, how in his next Symphony — which I should be inclined to call the Homosexual Tragedy — where Tchaikovsky was faced by the same challenge as Beethoven, and was forced to meet it in the same way, the end was bound to be, not the blare of triumphant conquest, but the deep groan of utter despair. Here, however, the finale attains the full expression of Tchaikovsky's gospel, in which beauty leads on to harmonious energy, and the initial challenge of Life is accepted, transmuted from the minor to the major mode, merged into triumph and gladness.

It is not clear how far a composer realises what he is showing of himself. Possibly if he realised he would hesitate. But it is easier in music than in any other art to elude the confession of self-revelation. Whether or not he knows — and I suspect he often knows — the emotional logic of personal temperament is deeper than all the subterfuges of art and can never be eluded.

APRIL 12: It is one of the first days of Spring, and I sit once more in the Old Garden where I hear no faintest echo of the obscene rumbling of the London streets which are yet so little away. Here the only movement I am conscious of is that of the trees shooting forth their first sprays of bright green, and of the tulips expanding the radiant beauty of their flaming globes, and the only sound I hear is the blackbird's song — the liquid softly gurgling notes that seem to well up spontaneously from an infinite Joy, an infinite Peace, at the Heart of Nature, and to bring a message not from some remote Heaven of the Sky or the Future but the Heaven that is Here, beneath our feet, even beneath the exquisite texture of our own skins, the Joy, the Peace, at the heart of the mystery which is Man. For Man alone can hear the Revelation that lies in the blackbird's song.

These years have gone by, I scarcely know how, and the heart has often been crushed and heavy, life has seemed to recede into the dimness behind, and one's eyes have been fixed on the End that crowns all. Yet on the first days of Spring, and this Spring more than those of the late years that passed over us, soft air and sunshine lap me around and I indeed see again the solemn gaiety of the tulip and hear the message in the blackbird's low and serenely joyous notes, my heart is young again, and the blood of the world is in my veins, and a woman's soul is beautiful, and her lips are sweet.

MAY 2: I remember reading years ago, in I know not what sacred book of India, of a prophet of olden time who wandered about the country, like Jesus, accompanied by his disciples. Early one morning they were aroused by the muezzin from a neighbouring minaret calling to prayer. 'The Voice of God!' exclaimed a zealous disciple awaking the slumberers. It chanced that from one of them as

he roused himself from sleep there broke as it were the sound of wind. 'And that also is the Voice of God,' said the Teacher. Then the disciples turned and rebuked the Master, for it seemed to them that he spoke blasphemy. But he replied: 'The one sound and the other are but vibrations of the air. Both alike are the Voice of God.'

I have thought since of that profound utterance, so rich with symbolic meaning, of the wise old Moslem Teacher of India. Men hear the Voice of God from the lofty towers where the muezzin stands. But as the mystic vision pierces deeper into the mystery of the world, it is seen that the Divine is more truly manifested in the falsely so-called humble human things; the winds and the waters of the world are all passed through the human form and cannot be less admirable for their association with that exquisite mechanism. So it is, we see, that to the Mystic the Human becomes Divine, and the voice of winds and streams, here as elsewhere, is the Voice of God.

MAY 6: Yesterday, here in London, the sky was dark. The rain dropped continuously, one's spirit was dismal. To-day the air has been washed clean, the sky is bright, the trees burst into fresh green. Here, as I sit in the Old Garden, the flowers flash with warm radiance beneath the sun, and I hear the deepest wisdom of the world slowly, quietly, melodiously voiced in the throat of the black-bird. I understand. I see the World as Beauty.

To see the World as Beauty is the whole End of Living. I cannot say it is the aim of living. Because the greatest ends are never the result of aiming; they are infinite and our aims can only be finite. We can never go beyond the duty of Saul, the Son of Kish, who went forth to seek his father's asses and found a Kingdom. It is only so that the Kingdom of Beauty is won. There is that element of truth in the contention of Berg-

son, no intellectual striving will bring us to the heart of things, we can only lay ourselves open to the influences of the world, and the living intuition will be born in its own due time.

Beauty is the end of living, not Truth. When I was a youth, by painful struggle, by deliberate courage, by intellectual effort, I won my way to what seemed to be Truth. It was not the end of living. It brought me no joy. Rather, it brought despair; the universe seemed empty and ugly. Yet in seeking the Asses of Truth I had been following the right road.

One day, by no conscious effort of my own, by some inspiration from without, by some expiration from within, I saw that empty and ugly Universe as Beauty, and was joined to it in an embrace of the spirit. The joy of that Beauty has been with me ever since and will remain with me till I die. All my life has been the successive quiet realisations in the small things of the world of that primary realisation in the greatest thing of the world. I know that no striving can help us to attain it, but, in so far as we attain, the end of living is reached and the cup of joy runs over.

So I know at such a moment as this, to-day, as I sit here, alone, in the warm sunshine, while the flowers flame into colour and the birds gurgle their lazy broken message of wisdom, however my life may be shadowed by care, and my heart laden with memories, the essential problems are solved.

MAY 11: The Old Testament has come into fashion again, as of old it came into fashion among the Covenanters, and much impresses our rampant fire-eaters, not least, it would seem, those of Ulster. It is an excellent collection of books; one is glad that under any pretext it should come into fashion. But let us not forget the wisest, the most human, the most eternally modern book in that collection. It is always pleasant to remember that in the earliest of

my own publications I expressed the esteem in which I held, and have continued to hold, the Book of *Ecclesiastes*.

That book is not indeed the only book in the Old Testament which mankind should for ever hold in reverence and diligently read. There is *The Song of Songs*. Of that book, too, it is pleasant for me to remember that at the age of eighteen, I made for my own satisfaction an English translation of Renan's dramatic version. It is a beautiful poem of the loveliness of Man and Woman. Lately, indeed, I heard it described as 'charming but rather thick in places.' I should myself prefer to say that it is the most superb of all inspired statements of the Adoration of the Body.

But there is a still more profound wisdom in the Book of *Ecclesiastes*. It is indeed a pensive book; not pessimistic, rather there is an exquisite balance of optimism and pessimism, the sense that we need both, and both in full measure, when we would adequately grasp the whole of life. The early blood-thirstiness of the ancient Hebrew has altogether fallen away, and his tribal monotheistic ferocity has been mellowed into the widest human tenderness, and his passion for financial operations has not yet been born. In the absence of all these characteristically Hebrew absorptions, the world seems to the seer a little empty, the abode of 'vanity.' Yet there was one great Hebrew trait still left to him, the most precious of all, a sunny humanitarian universalism. Throughout his languid and short course through that little book, his hands drop golden honey, his low and deep voice, never raised, always gentle and always clear, utters sweet and wise and serene words that will remain true as long as men survive who know what words mean.

There is no better book in the Old Testament than the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, and if I had the ordering of the matter I would be inclined to insert it also in the New, even three times over, after the Gospels and after the Epistles and after

the Book of the Revelation, as a perpetually recurring refrain.

MAY 17: In the degree in which I have been privileged to know the intimate secrets of hearts, I ever more realise how great a part is played in the lives of men and women by some little concealed germ of abnormality.

For the most part they are occupied in the task of stifling and crushing those germs, treating them like weeds in their gardens, which may indeed be stifled and crushed but will always spring up again unless they are uprooted, and these plants can never be uprooted because they are planted deeply down, entwined with the texture of the organism.

So these people are engaged in a perpetual contest, a struggle of themselves against themselves, an everlasting effort to ensure that what they consider the higher self shall hold in check the lower self. Thereby they often attain strength of character. They are fortified for living. It can scarcely be said they are sweetened or enriched.

There is another and better way, even though more difficult and more perilous. Instead of trying to suppress the weeds that can never be killed, they may be cultivated into useful or beautiful flowers. The impulse that is selfish or perverse or harmful may in the end be so transmuted as to bring forth fruits meet for service or for science or for art, no longer a poison for him in whose heart they grow and for those who surround him, but a precious herb for the healing of the nations. Thus in place of hard and loveless struggle and the perpetual production of a barren and virtuous soil, there is the prospect of harmony in fruitfulness, a life that has been enriched and sweetened by what had else been its bane.

For it is impossible to conceive any impulse in a human

heart which cannot be transformed into Truth or into Beauty or into Love.

MAY 19: 'You have never seen him!' It was the confident reply of a sculptor, four years ago, to a wife who had come to his studio to view the clay model of a bust of her husband and felt a little disappointment on finding it rather unlike her own vision of the original, 'You have never seen him!'

That remark, so characteristic of the artist temper, occurs to me now as I read Croce's *Æsthetic*, and at the same time I am reminded of another remark, this time made by a Cornishman who used to come to do odd jobs. He possessed more than a due share of that gift of 'divine laziness' which Quiller-Couch claims for the people of his Duchy, and we would often find him spending long periods in the contemplation of his work instead of doing it. One day when thus discovered and reproached he exclaimed: 'There's some men can do more by half an hour's watching a job than others in a whole day's work!' He can scarcely have been aware that Leonardo da Vinci also, when similarly reproached by the Prior of Delle Grazie for spending his time opposite his 'Last Supper' and doing nothing, had replied in almost the same words: 'Men of lofty genius when they are doing the least work are most active.' It was a profound observation, and we were so delighted that from that day forth we nicknamed him the Artist.

Vision and the expression of his vision are the artist's concern. It is not by work but by vision, by concentrated intense vision, such vision as is an intuition of the underlying truth, that he performs the first and chief part of his task. All intuition, as Croce puts it, is expression, and the artist, the man of genius differs from the rest (as Bergson has specially insisted) by the fact that while for most of us intuition is shallow and

limited, a mere affixing of general labels, or at the most index numbers, for the man of genius it is deeper and wider, a realised expression of a vision which for the rest of the world remains unseen. The retort of Turner to the lady who complained before his pictures that she had never seen such effects in Nature, remains just: 'Don't you wish you could, Madam?' In other words the artist who is a man of genius possesses not only a greater power of expression, but primarily a power of deeper and wider intuition.

So it comes about, I now think, that when the bright-eyed eager sculptor moulded his vision of a tortured and anxious soul, brooding in a contemplative sadness that was scarcely visible to the critical observer, his intuition may have rightly forecasted.

JUNE 1: In a newspaper to-day I see an interview by one of our best journalists with a colonial general who is directing an important subsidiary department of the war. He is a man of forty, a senior wrangler of his colonial university, who has given his life to business. He is described as a man of master mind, a man of imagination as well as of cheerful exuberant energy. And this is the refrain of his remarks, rendered with much picturesque vividness: 'The war is good for us. Now we know there is something bigger in the world than money.'

The temper of interviewers in their commerce with eminence evidently tends to optimism. But it would not be easy, one imagines, to find anything more likely to confirm even the most confirmed pessimist. For here is presented to us a man whom we are told to regard as the finest type produced by the modern world, and, it seems, nothing less than the ruin of that world is needed to teach such a man the mere Alphabet of Life.

JUNE 7: It is a perpetual wonder and delight to watch how during the last twenty years the whole prehistory of the world is being slowly revealed to us, with fresh marvels at every stage of the revelation. It is not long since the date of the world's creation was fixed at a few thousand years ago; now it extends to hundreds of millions, and even the age of Man himself is beginning to be thought of as running into millions. It is but thirty years ago that Virchow, the greatest authority of his time, could believe that the solitary Neanderthal skull of Palæolithic man was merely a pathological specimen. Now Neanderthal Man is a genus with many species, a being with a skull sometimes as capacious as our own, and with pioneering and inventive powers as great as our own, while behind Neanderthal Man there are other more vaguely seen beings who were yet already Man. Then there was the Magdalenian Age, the climax of a later type of Palæolithic Man's development, the race of cave-men, who were such artists that they even neglected the fine perfection of the implements of daily life in seeking to perfect the manifestation of their æsthetic sensibility. Then, again, there was the subsequent Azilian Age with its yet unsolved problems. And then, during some eight thousand or so years, there followed the revolutionary Neolithic Age which laid the solid foundations on which we still live, for little of importance has been added since. There was the Bronze Age, with its seemingly new cult of Woman. There was finally Crete with its vastly long Minoan civilisation, almost as modern to our eyes as our own to-day, and the flashing moment of its aftermath in Greece; and there was that long reverberating Decline and Fall of Rome, in the trail of which we still live, since Christianity was but a Roman filtrate of the Near East.

We cherish the popular doctrine of Progress — I have sometimes cherished it myself — yet I sometimes wonder if we have not made a huge mistake. Might it not be better if we cher-

ished the doctrine in a reversed form? Might it not be better if we looked upon Progress as backwards? Was not the classic world — which was in a better position to know — wiser when it placed the Golden Age in the past and not, as we, doubtless influenced by the pessimistic conceptions of Christianity, in the impossible future of another world, first in the skies and then on earth? So we should indeed be trailing great clouds of glory along with us instead of being engaged in the painful task of searching for them in an uncertain future. Indeed the whole cosmic conception would fall into a new and more satisfying harmony. As things now are, we are compelled to believe that the earth is slowly decaying towards a final catastrophe, while Man, its most conspicuous inhabitant, is slowly marching towards the height of ideal Perfection. It is a painful clash of absurdly contradictory conceptions, only, it would seem, to be resolved when we attain to the faith that Man and the Earth, after their long and agitated career, surely unique in the cosmos for fantastic charm, are at length declining together towards their sorely needed and infinite Rest.

Would not some such large and harmonising conception as this revolutionise and revitalise morals? Nothing has so intoxicated and maddened the men of the latest period of world-history as that doctrine of Progress towards a great future which they were passionately striving to achieve. (We may see it even in the present war.) In the great Pacification of the tender bonds of a common Fate, in the dying down of contentions which have grown out of date, in the growth of a Toleration at length made possible, in a new vision of Fellowship and Joy among Comrades doomed in the same Great War, we attain to a morality which a genuinely realised faith in the Final Death of Man can perhaps alone render possible.

JUNE 15: This morning, walking along the street I dwell in, I came on a girl in the middle of the pavement, with her skirts well raised above her knees, pulling up and adjusting her stocking. As I approached, she glanced up and then resumed her operation.

Posterity might regard this as a singularly insignificant incident which only an imbecile could mention. But Posterity cannot know that in the European world wherein I lived for more than half a century that little act was almost revolutionary. In the world I knew, whenever a woman wanted to pull up her stocking she retired into a dark corner, as though to commit a nuisance, or at least turned her shamefaced countenance closely to the wall. Moreover, this girl was clearly of the flourishing working-class, precisely the class that is most strictly observant of modest propriety.

But it so happens that in these years of war, skirts have been contracting upwards as never before, so as to fall even in their normal range only a few inches below the knee. Evidently this revolutionary girl had made the great discovery that under these new conditions the traditional ceremony prelude to the act of pulling up one's stocking had become an antiquated and absurd convention. There seemed no longer any reason remaining for being ashamed to perform the operation openly. So by virtue of that simple directness of vision she becomes a pioneer.

The process is symbolical of pioneering genius generally. All genius, Hinton used to argue, is merely Nature finding the simple way of doing a thing and letting fall the difficult complicated ways, or, as he would also insist, of learning to do virtuously what before could only have been done viciously. We see, also, more than that. All the exhortations you could think of to reasonableness and true modesty would never have persuaded that girl to pull up her skirt in the middle of the pavement. She came upon it, not straightly but in a curve, by

a sort of mathematical process, one set of changed conditions automatically leading on to another set of changed conditions. For that is ever how Nature subtly leads us; it is a spiritual law, they said of old, that by indirection we find direction out.

JULY 15: Last month the country was suffering from drought, and as of late the food question has been in all men's minds, a Duke had what was regarded as the brilliant inspiration to issue a Call to Prayer for Rain. It so happens that June is normally rather too dry a month and July rather too wet, whence the natural basis of the superstition concerning Saint Swithin. So it has come about that the Prayer for Rain was only too successful and many curses have been called down on the unhappy Duke's head. As has so often happened before, the devout belief in the efficacy of prayer was not accompanied by equally devout belief in the lack of efficacy of the answers to prayer.

The value of Prayer is not to be called in question. It is a spiritual weapon of incomparable value both for offence and defence. The most varied among the great figures of history have borne witness to the value of Prayer, from Jesus to Casanova. Yet the devout believer who preserves his mental equilibrium must surely be much exercised concerning the right use of such a weapon. A skilful combination seems here required of two contradictory faiths. I recall that in my early years I prayed with much fervour. No doubt my prayers availed me much. Yet if the things I prayed for with most fervour had come to me I could have suffered no greater misfortune. We need the faith that our prayers will help us: we need also the faith that they require no answer. So that the devout man seems called upon to pray: 'O Lord! hear my prayer, but, O Lord, for God's sake don't grant it.'

JULY 19: We have walked from Felsted on a pilgrimage, long since projected, to the church of Little Dunmow. It is merely a fragment, enclosed to make a Church in the most awkward and ignorant manner, but it would have been well worth a longer pilgrimage. For this fragment is really a Lady Chapel, the south aisle of a great chancel (after a manner I find to be rather common in this district) of a great and glorious church built in what must have been the most exquisite so-called Decorated manner of the fourteenth century. Two hours scarcely sufficed us to examine all that there was to see in this small fragment of the great Church of the Augustinian Canons who had a Priory here, though of Priory and church almost nothing more now remains visible above the surface, all cleared away and utilised by the practical and economical people of this land, and even the fragment that remains is much defaced and its soft stone melted away. Yet there is enough left to enable us to reconstruct its lovely outlines, and many details remain in a more than latent condition — the most elegant of piscinas, the great beautiful southern windows, the delicate carving of small animals in the panelled compartments beneath. This old church, moreover, is not only an exquisite fragment of English architecture, it is a shrine of English history, for Robert Fitzwalter who headed the Barons at Runnymede — ‘Father of English Liberty’ he was termed in the days when the sacred significance of Magna Charta was still undisputed — was lord of the Manor of Little Dunmow and lies somewhere buried beneath this pavement. Another Fitzwalter, one of his descendants probably of the fourteenth century, is here figured with his wife at full length in elaborate costumes, above their tomb, and these two figures, mutilated and worn, are yet of a singular beauty, not only in their decorative details but above all in the head of Fitzwalter. Likely enough there may be other realistic heads of English gentlemen of the fourteenth century equal in inter-

est to this, but I cannot recall seeing them. That this impressive head is a realistic portrait and a fine work of art I can feel no doubt. A finely moulded face, of noble distinction and virile type, with lines of grave responsibility furrowed down the cheek, it bears — somehow to one's surprise — in the high character and delicate outline of the chin and in the beautiful lips, the marks of intellectual and even æsthetic refinement. Here we feel was not only emphatically a man, and a man of aristocratic breeding, but a man also of refinement and culture. When one recalls how, even three centuries later, the flattering and accomplished hand of Vandyck only makes clearer the essential barbarism of the young English nobles he depicted, here in the remote fourteenth century is a man who would seem to belong to some lost civilisation of which no record remains — if it were not for the genius of Chaucer — and if his chain mail and his much be-ringed finger suggests the barbarian then his face shows that such barbarism was merely a fashion of disguise and that the art of living is in every age the same. On the column near his feet is one of the *graffitti* — discovered by loving antiquarian research in various parts of the church — which points perhaps to the same moral. For here we see scratched faintly in the stone in ancient hand — by what pagan-hearted canon of Dunmow? — the words: *Dum sumus in mundo vivamus corde jucundo*. And we turn to contemplate the ecclesiastical chair (thought to be of the thirteenth century) in the chancel, once used in the Priory, maybe, and surely fitted to enable some jocund Prior to expand his heart freely, for the seat is some thirty inches in breadth. One could not easily find a dead little church with more fascinating meanings to unravel than this. When we can pore over its mysteries no longer we leave with regret and stroll to Great Dunmow, to examine more perfunctorily a more spacious but not more interesting church of much the same date. As we approach it we note close by an old inn with

the unusual sign of 'The Angel and Harp,' and as we enter the church we actually hear the sound of a harp and see in the else empty building the solitary figure of a girl in white in the chancel before her great brightly gilt harp. Some ten minutes later she covers her harp and quietly steals out of the church. She had evidently been rehearsing her solo part in a concert which is to take place in the church in the evening. Such is the extent of human imbecility (I have always found one can best observe it in oneself) that, until it was too late, neither of the rude masculine intruders had the presence of mind even so much as to think of the conventional compliment the circumstances seemed so obviously to suggest.

AUGUST 22: The problem of the origin of the belief in immortality has often exercised my mind. I have seemed to see a factor of it (for the dream theory hardly seems by itself to suffice) in the growth of foresight. The Mousterian or the Aurignacian man, who first in the world began to bury his dead, doubtless in the faith that they had a future which must be seen to — in the interest of the living who remained if not of the dead who had departed — had begun to be more aware than the men of earlier ages of the value of foresight in life. This foresight for the dead was a natural extension of the inevitable growth with culture of foresight for the living. At a much later period we see that the Egyptians, by their peculiar position in relation to the yearly movements of the great river on which their existence depended, were compelled beyond all peoples to exercise a concentrated and elaborate foresight, and they beyond all others were the people who carried the ritual of the dead and the faith in immortality to the ultimate summit.

Of late years it has come to me that the faith in the persistence of the soul may have among its factors not only the

growth of human foresight, but the growth also of aftersight, that aftersight which is the result of the emotional fixation of affection. As human power of love grew more intense, and the objects of it ever more deeply impressed on the mind — it might be hazardous to assert that the process developed before the Neolithic period when home-life in our sense first became possible — the aftersight of beloved dead persons must tend to leave on memory an imprint that is indestructible. At the point when this stage was reached in human development the sense of immortality — the immortality of the beloved which necessarily involved that of all — became inevitable. It was indeed a subjective sense, independent of intellectual beliefs or Palæolithic magic traditions, and might even exist side by side with total disbelief in its objective reality. For it is strictly a sense, a sense as convincing as our sense of the sun traversing the sky, which, as we know, until only yesterday produced conviction so intense that its denial seemed a heresy worthy of death. The innumerable impressions produced by the loved one's personality on the sensitive organism, the concentration of feelings and ideas, desires and fears, pleasures and pains, develop a Being within us strong and living enough to survive when the object from which they radiated and on to which they have been reflected, has turned to dust. Such a person may be closer to us and more alive than the people we see and hear and touch every day. The whole process is symbolised with delicate psychological truth in the charming Gospel story in legendary form of the resurrection of Jesus in the minds of the disciples who loved him, however the beauty of it has been marred by the crude Western realists who could not apprehend its spiritual meaning. We create by love an immortal being whom nothing can destroy until we, too, are turned to dust.

AUGUST 28: 'I hate books of emotion and sentiment. I never read them. But I love books of hard facts.' So writes a woman friend who is distinguished in imaginative literature.

Nowadays — though my friend is not younger than I am — that seems to me a youthful attitude. It is the child who is always wanting facts and perpetually desiring to know. Right that it should be so; it is a very necessary thirst, this thirst for facts, like the thirst for milk of the infant at the breast.

As one grows older one's attitude towards facts changes. One begins to see through them. So far from being hard they now seem remarkably soft, even when one thinks one has, with much trouble, succeeded at last in finding them. The most baldly statistical facts are shifting every moment, and they are the most relatively solid of all facts; even when it seems not so, they are still susceptible of endlessly different interpretations. You can stick your fist through them at any point.

The only hard facts, one learns to see as one gets older, are the facts of feeling. Emotion and sentiment are, after all, incomparably more solid than any statistics. So that when one wanders back in memory through the field of life one has traversed, as I have, in diligent search of hard facts, one comes back bearing in one's arms a Sheaf of Feelings. They after all are the only facts hard enough to endure as long as life itself endures.

SEPTEMBER 8: I who am an exile from Cornwall, banished to the chilly fogs of London, and able to understand what Ovid once wrote from Pontus, have been spending three days by the sea. All day long I have been lying on the cliff or the sands at work, while from time to time my eyes rested on the friendly vision of a dear woman, not too

far away, playing with her child. The sun and the air, mixed with that radiant vision, enter into my blood, pouring a new vigour into my veins and a new inspiration into my thoughts.

Inspiration! For it is only here that I inspire, that I really breathe, in the warm and pure air of the sea, which is the food of body and soul, the symbol of love, and the enrapturing wine of the world.

The pious devotees of Faith have clung to the conception of Inspiration and they made it meaningless or even ridiculous. Yet the most fantastic vagaries of Religion, when we can penetrate to the roots of them, are based firmly on the solid foundations of Nature. The breath of God may help us to realise the intoxicating breath of the sea.

SEPTEMBER 27: Beethoven so often irritates, alienates, even disgusts me, yet I never escape him. I brood with fascinated absorption over the problems he arouses. I delight in his incomparable mastery of his material. I am stirred by some of his music more deeply than by any other music, more ravished when it is lovely than by any other loveliness. The *Allegretto* of this Seventh Symphony, which I have heard so often with fear and wonder and hear again to-night, seems to me one of the miracles of music. It takes the usual place of the slow movement, as we note with surprise, for in form it is a light cheèrful dance movement. As such, I find some people pleasantly accept it. It is not so for me, nor could it have been so meant by Beethoven, who else would never have placed it where it stands. To me the miracle of it is that here so little is made to mean so much, and the trivial becomes adequate to express the awesome. There is indeed no music that gives me so profound a feeling of apprehensive awe, of humble reverence before the deepest facts of life; I think of all the things that have most shaken the

foundations of my life, and there is none to which this *Allegretto*, which sounds to some so light and cheerful, seems aught but the most fitting accompaniment I could conceive.

It is the technique of the supreme artist in Beethoven which — amid all that is clumsy and coarse and violent in his work — comes upon us again and again with endless delight. One realises it, for instance, so clearly in the familiar third *Leonore* Overture. There we feel — and it is exactly the same feeling we have of a sculptor like Rodin with his clay — the superb artist's delight in his technique, patiently and continuously working at his medium so as to mould it with subtle fingers to his will, so as to wring from the material at every point the utmost of its expressive beauty.

Beethoven's development was slow. He was long in attaining his mastery of art and of loveliness. It is true that if he had died at the age Schubert died he could never have been placed in the same high rank as Schubert. In the Symphonies especially I seem to trace his evolution, and I am always finding some new evidence of this. To-night it occurs to me how clearly the third, the fifth, the seventh, and the ninth mark the great spiritual stages of that advance. The third, the *Eroica*, seems to bring to an end his first stage, the objective stage in which his eyes had been fixed on the external rather than on the internal world. He had written it to the glory of Napoleon: now he was disillusioned about Napoleon, and he felt that the *Eroica* was, in a way, a *fiasco*. Henceforth he would not attempt to honour other people. He would button up his coat and assert himself. And there is the Fifth Symphony, the apotheosis of ruthless self-assertion. But, after all, he began to realise, there are others. I feel the sense of brotherhood in the superb finale of the Seventh Symphony. There is still struggle and conflict. But against the distant background of warfare it is the march, no longer of a solitary aggressive individual, but of a band of brethren we seem to hear. In the

Ninth, the Hymn to Joy, all conflict and warfare have fallen away. Here is something greater even than a band of brethren fighting against receding foes. It is the march of all Humanity in gracious harmony which we are in presence of at last. It has indeed been a struggle for Beethoven of all people to reach that conception, and nothing is left for us at the spectacle but reverence.

OCTOBER 10: When I come to wander now and then in these old towns and villages of Suffolk and the neighbouring East Anglian regions, my eyes always dwell with a peculiar satisfaction on their houses. It is not that I am impressed by their extraordinary beauty or originality or daring or skill. I am generally interested in the art of building, I delight everywhere in real houses — when I can find them. And I can think of houses I have seen in many countries which seemed to me more remarkable and memorable. These East Anglian houses are often lovely and harmonious, but on me the main impression they make is that they are homely. That is to say that they seem to sound notes I have heard many times before, and thus soothe me with rest and peace.

I am tempted to wonder how far that may be due to an innumerable band of forefathers who actually conceived, designed, planned in detail, and often maybe with their own hands raised and constructed the likes of these houses and sometimes it may have been the very houses I gaze at with so much satisfaction. Our eyes become adapted to joy among the things they have dwelt on after long use. But I have never lived in this region, never came to it till I was approaching middle age. So it is that the opposite alternative presents itself to me, and I imagine that these things are pleasing to me because I inherit the special nervous system of those who first made them on the model of their deep-seated instincts.

OCTOBER 14: It is always pleasant to walk through the Park to Santon Downham, and as we walked thither last week (even wondering in these days of fruit dearth whether there were any blackberries) I saw flashing before my inner vision as the stimulating aim of our expedition the little low relief, deep in its rough frame, set in the wall over the entrance to the south porch of that small attractive little church — attractive at least on the outside for it is always locked, possibly because there is nothing of interest inside — which with two or three small houses makes up Santon Downham. It is to me always the church of that delightful beast, lion or whatever he may be, with his splendid tail that seems to pierce his body in its great curves and flame out above him into a large fleur-de-lys.

Now as I sit talking with a friend in the gallery of Archaic Greek sculpture at the British Museum, my eye chances to fall on a stone low relief which in size and shape and tone, in its whole air, is clearly in the same tradition as the slab in the south porch of Downham, though it came from Lycia in Asia Minor and belongs to the archaic Greek period of the seventh century before Christ. Here, indeed, there are two figures, one a beast — they call it a lion — nearly related to the Downham beast, but with it seems to contend a naked man, and the compressed energy of his realistic form was doubtless beyond the other sculptor whose strength lay in decoratively conventionalised beasts. Now I seem to know that the slab of Santon Downham, however comparatively late in the tradition, belongs in type to a long-lived class of framed and pictured stones that began in the Eastern Mediterranean in the dawn of Greek art and continued on to the latest Byzantine times. But by what chance that delightful fragment of the East reached this remote corner of the Western world, what Crusader or pilgrim of fine or fantastic taste among these much-travelled East Anglians found it in Cyprus or elsewhere

and brought it here to aid in the building of his own local church, that I may never know, nor is it any matter.

NOVEMBER 10: This Sunday morning, as I passed the stable which is not far from my dwelling, I saw chalked on the door of it in capital letters the one word 'Eternity.' It is a rough and ill-fitting door and the ordinary stable of a commercial firm, but any background will serve him who seeks to set up the fundamental truth of the world. I cannot guess what he was like, but I am drawn to him by a bond of sympathy. It is not likely we should agree on the species of Eternity. Yet I, too, have made it my business in the world to chalk up 'Eternity' in my best capital letters on such rough and ill-fitting doors as I have been able to find for the purpose, not indeed the stables inhabited by respectable Houyhnhnms, but rather those which I sometimes suspected to belong to Yahoos.

To-day perhaps seemed to my friend a day specially fit for meditation on that word. For to-day news has arrived of the abdication of the Kaiser, which we imagine to mean the passing away of a whole epoch, and to-day we expect every hour to hear of the coming of Peace. Wars and Dynasties, they have come and gone for millenniums in this fussy and tortured world, careful and troubled about many things, a world where so few have time to think of the Divine Beauty which lies beyond and beneath. So I reflected afresh, as I listened this afternoon to the poignant melodies of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, still almost as much a revelation as it was nearly forty years ago, and between whiles the vision came to me of that stable door where my brother, whose heart must surely be fixed where alone true joys are to be found, had carefully set in chalked capitals for my good cheer and encouragement that great word 'Eternity.'

NOVEMBER 25: The Archbishop of Canterbury, it is stated in the newspapers, declared yesterday that 'the one thing which had aroused his indignation during the war was that it had been within the power of any foreign country to put a stop to the ringing of English church bells.' All we like sheep have gone astray. Some have been indignant over what they conceived to be the aim of a great military power to dominate Europe and the world, others have been indignant over the reckless destruction of beautiful monuments or that fruitless waste and mutilation of millions of young lives which Christianity has done nothing to stop, and yet others have been indignant over the imbecility and unworthiness of our Governments. But 'one thing' has aroused the indignation of the ecclesiastical head of the English Church. English Church bells ceased to ring.

It is an exquisite illustration of the professional bias. The Church is theoretically the established mouthpiece of the nation's deepest convictions on all the spiritual aspects of practical life as they arise. That it is so every Archbishop perpetually assures us. All the more delicious when the professional bias breaks through so firm a crust. The world may be devastated, and Man may be extended on the Cross. But his Passion and Crucifixion are nothing in comparison with the suspension of a trifling concomitant of ritual by which no living creature was a penny the worse.

Yet for me it is impossible not to sympathise with that delightfully absurd attitude. I have in old days often been annoyed by the sound of church bells breaking in violently on my own mood with their cheerful and irritating irresponsibility. During the war some latent germ of inherited emotion from remote ecclesiastical ancestors has asserted itself, and I have missed such of those bells as were beautiful. Now that I hear again every quarter of the hour the soft and simple chime of bells from a distant tower I find them soothing if

also sad. They sound with a sweet and melancholy ache, as out of a world in which I once lived with those I loved, in which I shall never live again.

DECEMBER 26: (This Impression was received in sleep and was set down in the early morning on awaking.)

Christianity began in a Star, seen in the East, may be a falling star, and the nucleus of Christianity is a little swirl of vapour, of a weight that was almost nothing. Yet around that insubstantial nucleus has gathered such a crystallisation of ecstasy and terror and torment that, for all we know, the illimitable universe may not have the like to show.

So there is nothing miraculous about it? But if this is not a miracle what then is a miracle?

JANUARY 18, 1919: If one is a patriot, it seems to me, he must glory in any manifestation of magnanimity or justice in his own people and feel a corresponding shame at the absence of such manifestations. Four years ago, when what seemed a wave of high disinterested emotion swept over England, even though it involved war, I felt a certain conscious pride, perhaps for the first time, in the fact, which before I had accepted as a matter of course, that I was English. But pride comes before a fall and I have repented since. The crest of that high wave has been swiftly shown to have behind it a remarkably deep pit.

I on whose brain is impressed for ever the superb procession of deep blue South Atlantic waves, as solid to view as the marble of earth, splashed with foam as delicate as the fleecy clouds of the sky, with their uplifted crests and the vast curves of their deep troughs, I ought to be the last to forget that law of Nature.

JANUARY 20: I have often wished that some disciple of Jesus had proved a Boswell. To be able to catch the precise definite outline of that figure as it impressed itself on the eyes, to know how this man met the ordinary routine of daily life, what he said in casual intercourse, the tones of his voice, and all those little mannerisms of conduct which reveal so much — how nearer we should be brought to that unique person, and what devastation so scandalous a Fifth Gospel would have wrought beforehand in the ranks of the orthodox! Still one knows they would save themselves by declaring that it was a blasphemous forgery.

I still wish for a Boswell of Jesus, but I realise now more than ever what a supreme work of art we already possess in the Gospels. That is not to say that the history of Jesus is a myth. The theory is scarcely credible. To suppose that the religion of Jesus differed from all the other religions which came into the world about that time — the religion of Confucius, the religion of Buddha, the religion of Mahomet — by crystallising round a figure of the imagination, would be to confer on it a supreme distinction one would hesitate to recognise. Religion, like love in Stendhal's famous analogy, must always crystallise round some twig of the tree of life. Apart from such aprioristic considerations, Binet-Sanglé — though the orthodox refuse to recognise his existence and the unorthodox cross the road to pass him by on the other side — seems to have placed Jesus on a pedestal of solid pathological human reality from which it will be hard to tear him down.

There was a real Jesus, impossible as it will ever be even for the concentrated vision of a Binet-Sanglé to discern all his features. Yet around that concealed human person it is really the Imagination of Man which has built up the lovely crystal figure we see. An innumerable company of men, who had a few of them seen Jesus and most of them only heard of him, aided in this task. Each threw into it his highest inspiration,

his deepest insight, with the sublime faith — based on that deep human impulse, seen even in our dreams, to exteriorise our own feelings — that this divine moment of his own soul could only be the truthful expression of a Saviour and liberator of Man.

It was the peculiar virtue of the personality of Jesus that all these inspirations and insights could adhere to it and drew together into a congruous whole. At the same time a reversed process was evidently in movement. All the facts of the hero's life, actual or alleged, and all his sayings, real or apocryphal, were sifted and filtered through the human imagination, so purged that not a single trivial, ignoble, or even ordinary crude unpleasing statement has come down to us. At once by putting in and by taking out, with an art like that of the painter and the sculptor in one, under some rare combination of favouring conditions, the human imagination, out of the deepest impulses of the human heart, has unconsciously wrought this figure of Jesus, purified of dross and all gold, tragic in its sublimity and tremulously tender in its loving-kindness. So that now when I open and turn over with reverent joy the leaves of the Gospels, I feel that here is enshrined the highest achievement of Man the Artist, a creation to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be taken away.

JANUARY 25: Now that the war is giving place to the 'Peace' we are permitted to see what it is, not only, for our own humiliation, on its spiritual side, but also on its physical side, as a state of exhaustion, hunger, and death for the greater part of the European world. In Russia and Germany and Austria, and so many other smaller countries, the nations are being slowly, or quickly, starved, robbed of beauty and vigour and vitality, sapped at the racial roots by

unchecked diseases, in large numbers actually killed. Here in England, save for a few harmless privations, we have suffered not at all.

This moment, which would have been golden for a nation with any Utopian impulse of generosity, or of justice, or of humanity, is chosen by our Food Controller to fling out a vast extra amount of food for the consumption of his English public. It is astonishing — or surely, at least, it should be astonishing — to find that every one accepts this policy with equanimity and even with joy. No one says: The nation has been equally rationed with much reduced foodstuffs and all have done well; now apply that method to Europe, which needs it so sorely. No one says: How can I accept more than I have been proved to need when others are perishing for lack of what I unnecessarily take? Not one sees, not one apparently has the imagination to see, the sallow, lean, hungry faces of innumerable men and women and children, the infants who waste and die, the well-bred folk who hunt greedily in the garbage. We stolidly sit and grind our massive British jaws before superfluous piles of food which our warehouses and cold storage can scarcely hold, while our Patriotic Press exults and calls for more.

Human beings suffer from a defect of imagination, and I suppose the defect is incurable. One notes that the Swiss alone, themselves far worse off than we are in England, have sacrificed their own needs to send food into Austria, not because they are nobler than we are or more imaginative, but because they are next door to the people who starve, they can see them. We are separated; the salt estranging sea cuts us off from Europe, and cuts us off from human sympathy.

I see no mechanism to provide the human species with imagination. A greater degree of international intercourse, as well as the use of an auxiliary common language, would help to dispense with the need for imagination. But Man is a

gregarious animal, the creature of his small flock, inimical, at best indifferent, to all other flocks. If Nature needs a truly sympathetic international animal, Nature must wipe out Man and produce another species.

MARCH 16: It is reported that the Channel Tunnel between France and England is likely at last to be made. The English Government and the English military authorities, which hitherto have regarded such a scheme as a terrible menace to England's insularity, have just begun, it seems, to realise that had the Channel Tunnel been in existence when the Great War broke out that war would have been brought to a much speedier end, not to mention that a vast amount of human death and pain would have been avoided, as well as an incalculable cost in money saved. This tardy decision seems to be received with much enthusiasm.

Many years ago, when the scheme was first brought forward, I, too, felt full of youthful enthusiasm for the Channel Tunnel. It seemed to me to have both a symbolical and a practical value in bringing England nearer to that beloved land of France, then so often viewed with suspicion or contempt, which I regarded as the great pioneer of civilisation in the modern world. I poured scorn on the petty and miserable fears which relegated that scheme to an indefinite future.

But now! The Great War in which the Tunnel might have rendered such service is over, and for the moment, France, only too well seconded by England, is the Pioneer, not of Civilisation but of the Reaction against Civilisation. I recognise still that the Tunnel must be made, and that it is well that it should be made. But as for enthusiasm — that I am content to leave to a generation more likely than I am to find pleasure

in constructing a perennial monument to what a prominent American terms the Exquisite Stupidity of the British.

MAY 12: A scholarly diplomatist, known also to a select circle as the most learned of Casanovists, mentioned to me yesterday that he possesses a book, written by a physician in 1848, entitled *De Morbo Democratico*, in which Democracy is considered as a kind of insanity, and technically discussed in relation to etiology, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment.

‘Are they mad?’ asked a brilliant intellectual woman lately in bewilderment concerning those bargains of the ‘Big Three’ at the Peace Conference — with the parties chiefly concerned in the bargain left out! — which seem to be doing more for the destruction of the world’s peace than ever the war accomplished.

We smile at the conception of the medically minded author of *De Morbo Democratico* in the year of Revolution. Yet to-day one may ask whether he was not after all inspired beyond the men of his own time and of ours, when he divined that politics, after all, is nothing but a species of insanity, of which, it may be added, the Democratic form — though that form hardly seems to me easy to diagnose — may not necessarily be the most virulent.

Politics began, as the name indicates, with the overgrown agglomeration of population in cities. It is where wars in any organised form also began. They alike cover but a small section of the vast history of Mankind. They seem to have emerged out of an easier and more harmonious social life. Is it not reasonable to assume that when their course is run, they will merge into it again? — *Eia, fratres, pergamus.*

MAY 14: At this most exquisite moment of the year — as also it came about last May — I find myself in the Bridge End Garden. The sky is clear, the sun is warm yet not hot, for the year is young and light breezes lap me round. The great trees are yet scarce covered by the soft divine green leaves that swell and open every day before my eyes, while behind me, I know, the apple and cherry trees are masses of white and pink tinged bloom, and the lilacs have sprung into bloom even since we came to this corner of Essex scarce more than a day ago. From just outside the Garden the beautiful bells of the Church sprinkle over me at intervals little golden showers of their leisurely notes, and within the Garden more birds than I know are rapturously pouring out their various songs. Once more, with the young Spring of the old Earth, my heart, too, is young, and I drink of the cup of Life's ecstasy, gazing down awhile at the book before me of Ruben Dario's *Prosas Profanas*, the meet companion for such a moment and such a mood. I read how on such a day as this the poet's soul looked out from the window of his 'Reino Interior.'

Oh fragante dia! Oh sublime dia!

Se diria que el mundo esta en flor; se diria

Que el corazon sagrado de la tierra se mueve

Con un ritmo de dicha; luz brota, gracia llueve.

Yo soy la prisionera que sonrie y que canta!

Still a prisoner, even in ecstasy. One drinks of the cup of ecstasy, but it is sometimes also, sometimes even at the same moment, the cup of anguish. For ecstasy and anguish are the life-blood of the world. They are the Sacrament, of Truth or of Love, in which the two elements are mingled. It is because one has drunk deep, if but once only, of that mingled cup that at last, and only at last, one becomes the Master of Life and the Master of Death, unable in the end even to see them apart, or to find any blemish in the face of either. So, unmoved in

spirit, we can depart from Life to Death, satisfied and serene, swathed in the benediction of 'the Peace of God which passeth all understanding,' as in old days they called it.

MAY 21: A friend showed me yesterday the rarely seen but often mentioned obscene *Sonnetti Lussuriosi* of Aretino, written to accompany the yet more noted *Figurae Veneris*, now lost save in bad copies, of Julio Romano, once accounted the first painter of his time. They seemed to me to be dull, and monotonous in their dulness, unworthy not merely of the high reputation of Aretino, *mezz' huomo et mezzo Dio*, but of the really sapid and vigorous pen of the scandalous friend of the noble Titian.

It may seem the correct and conventional thing to say when the question is of obscenity. Yet there need be no objection to obscenity as obscenity. It has its proper place in art as in life. The greatest writers have used it, Aristophanes, Dante, Chaucer, Rabelais, Sterne, even Shakespeare and even Goethe have sometimes been obscene. So also have the greatest painters, even Rembrandt, and the greatest sculptors down to Rodin. Nor must we, as some would have us, regard the obscenity of these great spirits as a stain to be pardoned and effaced; it is in the texture of their minds and their works, and that is why we must always resist any would-be 'expurgation.' To deny the obscene is not merely to fetter the freedom of art and to reject the richness of Nature, it is to pervert our vision of the world and to poison the springs of life.

But the expression of obscenity alone can only be a satisfaction, and then but momentary, to the crudest and most childish mind. Obscenity only attains its true and full value when it is the means of attaining a deeper reality and a newer beauty. That is how the great masters have used it, and therein is their justification. Those who object to obscenity

and yet have not realised this — even when they are so-called artists who wish to proclaim their own refined superiority yet thereby merely ‘write themselves down’ in the Shakespearean sense — have no right to lay their sacrilegious hands on the obscene.

I am indifferent to the obscenity of Aretino because I fail to see in it any insight into life or any unfamiliar beauty. It impresses me no more than the achievement of small boys who chalk up solemn naked words in capital letters on street walls and then run away; and it seems to me a manifestation of like nature.

MAY 24: Walking along the street early this Saturday morning, I noted a well-dressed man with rings on finger, daintily hearthstoning his front doorstep. I heard years ago of a high Government official who was wont to do this, but I have not before come across a man of this sort of social class thus occupied, and I viewed the spectacle with satisfaction. It is a spectacle that enters into my vision of life. I would contemplate with equal pleasure a peer of the realm, even if a little too gingerly, scrubbing the entrance to his own palace and a scullerymaid, even if a little too vigorously, playing Debussy on a grand piano.

It is merely an application of a great truth that applies to all the essential functions of living. In this as we call it menial sphere, it has indeed long been clear; even Jesus perceived it. I have no need to feel ashamed if to sweep my floor ‘as by God’s laws’ gives me a delicate pleasure. But in some fields of living the application is less explicit. It might seem so shocking, even so disgusting, to those weaker brethren who are not artists in living. Yet there should be no greater joy, if we would come nearer to the attitude of God, than when, amid the functions of life, we put down the mighty from their seat

and exalt those of low degree. This statement, let us remember, is presented as that of a village maiden who had recently received an erotic initiation, of which she has left the precise nature for ever hidden in the vague splendour of that *Magnificat*.

MAY 26: 'Saved!' That word in large capitals stands alone at the head of the newspapers this morning. The whole world is so much in need of salvation lately that a throb of hope might well instinctively seize the heart at the mere sight of that reassuring exclamation. But it merely means that a daring but foolhardy airman, who attempted without sufficient precautions to cross the Atlantic and naturally fell into the sea, had been rescued alive. A large part of the newspapers is occupied with the description of the delirious joy of the British public on this event, and nearly half a column is needed to describe how the airman's wife thankfully went to church. All the agony of the world, the slow starvation of millions of mankind crushed to despair, is forgotten, if it had ever been known.

I have long held that the gradual course of zoölogical evolution is towards the type of the child which is also the type of Genius. In actual practice, we have perhaps to recognise, this progress means less the prevalence of genius than the triumph of what we call Puerility.

MAY 31: She is girlish and slender, this great master of the violoncello. An attractive figure to look at as she comes on the platform, with her great beautiful instrument and her tragic Egyptian face, the brown hair that half falls and half curls round her head, wearing an embroidered wine-coloured overdress with long hanging sleeves and

underskirt of bright grass-green silk, most like a playing angel from the heavenly choir of some Florentine or Venetian Paradise. She is always grave and simple, she knows how to smile, but when her instrument is against her shoulder she is absorbed in her art and only speaks by her expressive eyes. She plays the concertos of Schumann and Lalo and a truly Spanish little Serenade Espagnole by Glazunov. She is so serious, the artist within her is so intensely alive. At times, when she bends back her head and long bare neck, and the blood-dyed drapery strays from the extended arm, she seems crucified to the instrument; with arched eyebrows raised there is almost an expression of torture on her face, one seems to detect a writhing movement that only the self-mastery of art controls, and one scarcely knows whether it is across the belly of the instrument between her thighs or across her own entrails that the bow is drawn to evoke the slow deep music of these singing tones.

She is gone. And now she comes on again, and she smiles and bows, and before the prolonged storm of hands that clap, at last she slightly raises both her arms outwards as though she would let fall from her the applause of the public before a revelation in which it has no concern. Then the dull street and the memory of a glimpse of Heaven withdrawn.

JUNE 3: On the estate of Mr. Balfour in East Lothian the discovery has lately been made in a pit, some two feet deep by two feet in diameter, of a hoard of broken silver vessels belonging to the fourth century. Some of the fragments were chased with designs which recalled in delicate beauty the work of the Renaissance, and some revealed sacred Christian emblems, while among them were casually mixed a few Roman coins and some rough Saxon ornaments.

It is surmised that this hoard represented the plunder made

by some barbarian Saxon pirates from the Frisian coast, pioneers in the Anglo-Saxon seizure of Britain, who had taken up their abode here, and here concealed the loot they had borne off from some monastery in Gaul, intending to melt it down, but frustrated by some sudden mischance, it may be the swift vengeance of the people they had injured. Even in those days our forefathers found the fruits of victory hard to gather.

We still live in the same world. To-day, sixteen centuries later, Mr. Balfour, who has in due course succeeded to the same East Lothian seat, is organising a plundering excursion to Gaul, with certain others in the band — Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson, Orlando, and the rest — not this time to loot merely a monastery but the whole world.

History, it seems, like Nature, delights in a perpetual slight novelty. Here we see, not merely an immense magnification of a process which is essentially the same, but an impartial transformation of the labels. We call the plunderers Christians now, we call the plundered barbarians, and we realise the importance of that ancient natural device of mimicry, which we call by the unnecessarily hideous name of camouflage, and we paint, over all, the beautiful figures of Justice and Democracy and Righteousness.

Be of good cheer. It is only externals that change. The world is essentially the same, the world out of which we proceed, into which we pass again — as in my first circus at Antwerp where once with childish joy I viewed the endlessly emerging procession of whooping horsemen who galloped round and out at one side to reappear on the other side, the endlessly emerging procession which was yet always the same.

JULY 5: An admirable journalist, Mr. Harold Begbie describes the Derby, the so-called 'Victory Derby.' He tells how happily he set out, and how a mood of depres-

sion and melancholy slowly crept over him until his dominant feeling was pity, and even the comedians seemed to him tragic. This dark and dreary 'Victory Derby' — he cautiously refrains from directly suggesting that it was symbolic of our 'Victory' — seemed to him sombre and touched by menace.

I have never been to the Derby and I am well content that it should reflect for the benefit of the thoughtless some faint image of the world to-day. But at the same time I know that there was nothing novel in the sight that met Mr. Begbie's perhaps unfamiliar eyes. For though I have never been to the Derby I was a boy at school on the high road from London to Epsom and was wont to watch all day — for we were always given a holiday for such an occasion — the crowds, from lords to costers, that drove to and from the Derby. As long as I live I can never forget the people in that long melancholy procession of varied vehicles. Those pale, weary, draggled figures, their pathetically vulgar jokes, their hollow spasmodic gaiety, sadder than sorrow, that depressed Mr. Begbie yesterday, were just the same nearly half a century ago.

They are not merely symbols of our joy in Victory, they are still more significant of our national temperament. For all our boasted practicality, we are idealists always, and indeed that practicality is an outcome of our idealism, always pitched too high for any satisfaction that the world can yield, yet always impelled to seek it with ever more feverish energy. We have not the aptitude of the French to become artists in life and accept all its eventualities with good humour. We have not the aptitude of the Spanish to be children in life and to appreciate simply all its little things. We are so high strung that there is nothing left for us but religion and the variegated preachers who form that spectacle, unique in the world, we see at the Marble Arch.

JULY 14: I have been reading a fragment of *Interim* by Miss Dorothy Richardson whose impressionistic novels arouse the enthusiasm of many lovers of fine literature. Certainly it is delightful to read. There is such a beautiful surface to this writing, so smooth and yet so rich. I pass my hand over the texture of it with a delicious as it seems physical sensation. And one feels that there is here throughout so exquisite a sensibility to the inner world and the outer world. Every sensation, every emotion, every thought, that passes over the heroine, no matter how subtle or how trivial, the whole stream of consciousness, is noted with such precise discrimination, I feel as though the writer had brought to her task a new instrument of a high power — a microscope that reveals fresh details, a micrometer that cuts more finely, a thermometer that registers slighter variations. Other writers may reveal but it is by different methods, Conrad, for instance, by a splendid felicity of metaphor and simile, a poet's art, as also in a different way is the art of Hardy. But Dorothy Richardson is not a poet. She is an artist, certainly, but an artist who has something of the scientific attitude, and her observation is marked by a delicate precision which is nearer to science than to poetry. We feel that the surface of Miriam's soul is being explored before us in every little intimate fold and flock, by an investigator who is tender indeed yet ruthlessly exact. It is very fascinating.

Yet, I am inclined to ask myself, is it also very interesting? I can read a few pages of it with a rare enjoyment. But is there anything in it to draw me on through a thousand or more pages? I crawl with satisfaction over this beautiful surface, and I am quite ready to believe that it is not merely surface but in real connection with a depth beneath. Yet that depth is not revealed to me by the artist. I have to divine it, even to create it, by my own efforts.

What diminishes my interest in work that is yet so fine, is

my feeling that the artist is not in complete control of that work. She seems to have set out to tell us everything, to involve her whole art in the completeness of this record of one woman's soul spread out through half a dozen volumes. We know how Miriam reacted to every plate of food and every drink set before her at dinner; we know how she felt all over her body when she sat in an uncomfortable chair; we know exactly how the streets of London appeared to her sensitively discerning vision; we know what her blouse seemed like to her, and her night-dress. Yet we discover that whole vast tracts of consciousness, at least equal in importance to these, and sometimes of far greater importance, are shut out from our view. Miss Richardson has at every point submitted her scheme to an inner censorship made in the image of the conventional public. We see that she always has an eye on the *Circulating Librarian*, and as soon as she begins to detect the trace of a frown on his face she has changed her course. We are told in the most minute detail all that had happened at breakfast, and after breakfast we are told how Miriam went upstairs, and how she passed the little lavatory door, but we are not told why she passed that little door just when we might have expected her to enter in. So of greater and more significant events in personal life, which yet must needs be bound up inextricably with the intimate and the trivial. In Miriam's bedroom, minutely and precisely as so many unimportant little details are set down, we only become the more conscious of the things that are not set down. In that room, we realise, Miss Richardson has been faced by the essential facts of Miriam's physical and spiritual life, and she has failed to meet the challenge. She set out to present before us Miriam complete, and yet the things that matter are left a blank which the minuteness of the record itself serves to emphasise.

Now the realisation of such a blank might be impertinent, or in bad taste, before novelists who had not undertaken to set

before us all the intimate details of life. We have no sense of failure before Fielding or Flaubert or Tolstoy. Their art involved the exclusion of all details that were not significant though they never asked the world what details they might be allowed to count significant. But Dorothy Richardson's method is different. It is a comprehensive method of recording even the faintest fluctuations on the stream of consciousness. It is more like the method of the Goncourts (and a little like the method of Proust), more subtle and more veracious than the method of the Goncourts. But the Goncourts were not afraid to set the essential things down. They never came humbly to the world, or even the police, to ask what they might be allowed to set down, they preferred prosecution to that (remember *La Fille Élise*), and so their art, even though it may be in some respects inferior, is nearer to great and original art, which is always fearless.

No doubt it would be unpleasant to meet the condescending disapproval (which everything great and real must meet) of the superior person. One may be told that Dorothy Richardson perhaps bears in mind James Joyce, whose *Ulysses* appears alongside *Interim* in the same *Little Review*; he has written down what he desired to write down but only with the result that it is 'expurgated' before it reaches the public. It would, they say, be impossible. But if one deliberately chooses a method which leads straight to the Police Court and then oneself stops short because the road seems impossible, one admits that one's whole art is impossible. And for the great artist there is nothing impossible. He knows that if he cannot live up to the implications of his art then either his art is wrong, or he is. Here I find a new and exquisite instrument for art has been created, but it is guided by the hand of Mrs. Grundy. That seems to be the reason why my admiration for Dorothy Richardson's art is so considerable and my interest in it so small.

JULY 19: To-day is a Day of Joy to celebrate the coming of 'Peace.' It seems to be thought that we should all be well content to celebrate anything whatsoever that is able to masquerade under that name. But that any one who remembers the beginning of the war, and the cause of it, can find anything in the present 'end' of it to rejoice over is a wholesome reminder that we must never take the world too seriously.

'Every country has the criminals it deserves,' said Lacasagne profoundly. And if a few ancient and doddering persons have survived out of a past that some thought dead, to mould the present, it must doubtless be added that every country has the rulers it deserves. They urged on their people five years ago to what they called 'a war to end war' (much as though, a keen-witted woman has said, they had urged them on to acquire syphilis, as 'a disease to end disease'), and already their military leaders, feeling that that cliché was perhaps a little silly even for human consumption, are bringing forward others still more familiar about 'a war like all wars,' and the 'lessons that will be useful for the next war,' and the dishonour of 'shaking hands with a blood-stained tyranny' (not of the Tsardom, oh no!), and now that the War to end War is so triumphantly concluded we are all bidden to rejoice over the Peace to end Peace. Great is the power of words. Give us this day our daily catchword, the public prays, and our Governments are in that kind of rationing indeed experts. Bread and circuses they gave the Roman public, they give the British the Newspaper Press, and it seems to be equally satisfying at a smaller cost. So it is that the faith in Progress is justified.

It has seemed to me that I could not more fittingly celebrate this great occasion than by lying down quietly at home and re-reading the account of Gulliver's visit to the Houyhnhnms. Swift has been roughly used during two centuries. On

the one hand he has been regarded as a cynic who degraded human nature. On the other hand — with that contradictoriness which is certainly of the essence of human nature — he has been regarded as the accomplished author of a book for children. We all read *Gulliver's Travels* in childhood, with never a word of introduction or explanation. That Swift was one of the supreme masters of English, the deepest and most sensitive of moralists, the most far-sighted of philosophers — that we are left to find out for ourselves, or to discover in the writings of foreigners, as of the Italian critic Papini, often so severe in his estimates of literary persons, yet ready to recognise in *Gulliver's Travels* a book unique among the world's greatest books, with a profundity of wisdom beneath the surface of it which for every generation is new.

So what book could I more profitably take down from my shelf to-day? Yet I note that however truthfully Swift describes them, he never mentions that the moment when the world was stretched on the rack of a torture they could themselves have unwound if they would, was the moment the Yahoos were wont to celebrate a Festival of Joy.

JULY 20: I sometimes like to make clear to myself what are the great sentences in English that appeal to me most. As to Raleigh's invocation of Death, as the most magnificent, I seldom vary. It may not be a perfect sentence, one touch more to its grandiosity and it might topple over into absurdity. But the most magnificent it still remains. The most beautiful to me is Temple's sentence on Life: 'When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little, to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over.' There is a cadence there to thrill along the nerves as in no other sentence I can recall. (One might find others per-

haps in Saintsbury's *History of English Prose Rhythm*, a delightful book by an author with a wonderfully large and miscellaneous appetite for literature.) Is it strange, or is it not strange, I ask myself, that the two writers who thus summed up Death, and Life were not men of letters but a man of action, a man of affairs? They never twice approached that height, though Temple, at all events, made other attempts to say the same thing, as when he wrote: 'After all, life is but a trifle, that should be played with till we lose it, and then it is not worth regretting.' As the greatest masters of sentences, however, others nearly followed — leaving aside our translators of the Bible, who were superb — and I would name first Bacon and Landor, again a man of affairs and a man who would, if he could, have been a man of action. Bacon, supreme in a concise weightiness which yet embraces both exaltation and depth, Landor, in artfully wrought variety of perfection. Sometimes I would add Browne and often Thoreau, and occasionally I hesitate over Emerson. For in Emerson the fine sentences tend to become a little monotonous, almost a routine, and with too oracular a gesture. We can scarcely appreciate the clarion of the cock as he deserves, for his song has little variation and we find it high-pitched; there is too much gesture of the lifted body, too much vibration of wings, in this ejaculation. A blackbird's song is more moving, for it has a continual slight novelty, and it arises with complete serenity.

AUGUST 2: I read the remarks of a journalist that probably every writer loathes the sight of his pen. If that is so it seems an excellent reason why the reader also should soon come to loathe the work of that pen. It would surely be well for the world if every writer who loathes the sight of his pen should quickly take the next step and cease to

use it. The normal writer, one imagines, should neither loathe nor love the sight of his pen, so long as it performs its adjuvant functions wholesomely. He should as little loathe it as the ordinary person loathes the sight of a roll of toilet-paper, viewing it rather with a subconscious satisfaction as the suitable adjunct of his creative activities.

But for my part I would say a writer is unconscious of his pen. He feels merely as a bee might feel which is instinctively building an exquisitely planned architecture of cells and loading them as richly as it can with honey, thankful if he may even remotely approximate to the bee's success. For to me the writer's function is most adequately expressed, in Swift's words, as the production of the material for sweetness and light. 'Whatever we have got has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of Nature. Instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax; thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light.' Nothing better was ever said about the writer's function. If I were ambitious, I would desire no finer epitaph than that it should be said of me, He has added a little to the sweetness of the world, and a little to its light. The two are indeed inseparable. Without a clear-eyed vision there can be no sweetness that is worth while, and without sweetness there can be no true revelation of light. Leonard who was sweetest among men of art was at the same time the most clear-eyed among men of science.

AUGUST 20: As I entered Folkestone Church this morning the question came into my mind for the first time why it is that churches by the sea are dark. I regard a church as a beautiful vessel for enclosing light, variously moulded and modulated by the artist's craft. I know that in the cold north the builder tends to fill the church to the brim

with warm light and in the hot south to temper it cunningly with coolness and gloom. But athwart these tendencies there is the tendency, apart altogether from architectural style, from the English and French churches of the Channel down to far Barcelona, for the builders of churches by the sea to cherish obscurity.

Folkestone Church has a definite French touch in its massive, simple, harmonious construction, and the French signature is plain on the capitals of the columns. It is a church built on a height over the sea, and on the opposite coast also the churchmen whose flock were fishermen loved to set up their churches as spiritual lighthouses. The large solid central tower seems to hold the church down in place on this windy height, and the east end that faces the gales of the sea is only pierced by three lancet windows and a small ovaloid window above. So this dark church is darkest in the choir, which reverses the order of light in a regular Gothic church, though when the clerestory windows of the choir were open this may not have been the case. These practical considerations of the need of resisting gales — which once actually carried away a great part of this church — seem adequate to account for the gloom of seacoast churches.

Yet this characteristic is so widespread I seem to see more in it than this. It seems to answer to a real spiritual demand of the man who lives on the ever restless and hazardous sea. He needs for his hours of finest aspiration the sense of rest and security which no storms of the world can touch. These enclosures of sacred gloom are the visible embodiment of that ineffable peace. This, I think to-day, is the spiritual reason — beyond all practical reasons — why the seaman's perfect church is nearly everywhere a dark church.

OCTOBER 2: The railway men are not anarchists, the Bishop of London is reported to have said yesterday in a sermon on the strike which is now paralysing the country's activities; he could not believe that; they were mostly persons purely interested in wages and acting under a mistaken impression. 'There was, however, only one thing that Christian citizens could do,' added this *enfant terrible* of the Church, 'and that was to support the Government.'

There we have the real policy of the Church in England — indeed of all the Churches in all the countries — and the clue to the indifference, when it is not hostility, which the peoples of all the countries nowadays feel toward all the Churches. The Churches thought at the outbreak of war that a great revival was coming for them. They see in the end that the reverse has happened, and they invoke all sorts of reasons, save their own attitude. They fail to see that they have been content to be in every country a mere cog in the war-making machine, that on whichever side they were they have everywhere been willing to 'support the Government,' and that they share the discredit meted out to the Governments.

It was not always so. Becket is not nowadays always regarded as a man to worship. But at least he placed the Church above Governments and he defied Kings. He seemed to fail, he was slain in his own cathedral by the agents of Government. But he became the idol of the English people, the most national saint that England has ever produced, and his tomb became the chief of English religious shrines, the only English shrine that was world-famous and the perpetual resort of pilgrims.

No Canterbury Tales will ever be written of the pilgrims to the shrine of Becket's present successor on the archiepiscopal throne. Yet he had a magnificent opportunity. If at the outset of war he had risen above patriotism and anti-patriotism to the supreme superpatriotic position of Christianity, if he

had spoken not like Becket, in the name of Rome but in the name of the Lord's Prayer which millions still repeat, he would certainly have incurred the deadly enmity of the Government, and though he might scarcely have been found worthy to win the martyr's crown he would probably have been found unworthy to wear the archiepiscopal mitre. But he would have saved the Church, and his own name would never have been forgotten.

It is merely a dream, I know, for the Church is now the plaything of antiquaries, and our Archbishop of Canterbury was the inventor of that formula, so religiously, morally, even casuistically unsound, of 'regrettable necessities.'

OCTOBER 29: I see in to-day's paper that Chaliapin, the great Russian actor and singer, is reported to be dead.

The image comes vividly back to me of the tall, dignified figure, more especially in the part of Boris Godonov, with that air of aloofness, of spiritual serenity, by which Russians so often recall the traditional Christ, the ease and simplicity of his acting and the impressive singing voice, the superb Russian bass, the deep rich voice which alone seems adequate to the expression of profound emotions of tender humanity.

Chaliapin I am inclined to place among the three stage figures I have seen who now in memory leave the deepest impression: Ristori, Salvini, Chaliapin — it was the order in which I saw them, perhaps the order in which I should rank them.

Ristori I should certainly place first, though I only saw her once, on the stage in Sydney, as Pia de' Tolomei and the sleep-walking Lady Macbeth. She remains in my mind as the absolute type of the classic in dramatic art. That word 'classic' suggests to some people the coldly artificial, the conven-

tionally unreal. Ristori was at the farthest remove from that. She was the adorable revelation of what the classic really means: the attainment of the essential in dramatic art by the road of a simplicity and a naturalness from which all superfluity and extravagance have fallen away, so that every movement is under control and every gesture significant. In classic art such as this, simplicity is one with dignity, and the last utterance of poignant intensity is brought within reach. Salvini was very different. He was not classic. He carried human passion to the utmost limits of expression on the basis of robust physical force, and seemed to have an immense reservoir of emotion to feed his art. It was not his restraint that impressed one but the superb and never forced expansion of his energy. And finally there was Chaliapin, neither the classic perfection of art, nor the exuberant embodiment of romantic emotional energy, but with the seal on him of a serene and mysterious power that was aloof from the world. There are other great artists I have seen on the stages, figures instinct with fascination or with art, some of whom touched me more in their time. But these three remain.

CHRISTMAS DAY: Christmas is the season for childhood and youth. When we are young it is well we should gain its experiences, and lay away those memories which when we are old will bring tears into our eyes and into our hearts a crowd of tender haunting joys we can scarce know from pains, since we are glad because they once were ours and sad because they are ours no more. In the end, it may well be, our gladness swallows up our sadness, for memory is a part of living, and those beloved figures of the past who live in memory are with us for evermore, engrained into the throbbing fibres of our hearts, only to die when they cease to beat.

Yet one is always thankful to reach the end of every anniversary that is too richly burdened with memories. As I sit in the peaceful solitude of my room, never less alone than when alone, according to the old saying that Cicero recorded of Scipio, the couple who occupy the flat above begin playing on piano and violoncello with occasionally the accompaniment of the man's voice. He may not be a Pablo Casals and she may not be a Carreño, far from it, but the long succession of duets — to-night they seem resolved on an orgy of music which extends beyond midnight after I am asleep — is for one undesigned listener a continuous delight, the embodiment of delicious reverie, as that music often is which fails to concentrate absorbed attention on itself yet pleases us enough to play at will along the nerves and leave thought free. As I lie back in my chair, dreamily and happily, even though sometimes tears may seem not far away, I am borne along on a stream in which this endless flow of varied melody seems to accompany with willing abandonment the wayward flow of my own memories. I am on that ship with sails of silk and fine wrought tackle which Count Arnaldos, falcon on fist, once saw from the shore and heard the song of the mariner, so magically potent that the sea grew still and the birds alighted on the mast, the song that the Count vainly implored to be taught, for none could know the song who had not fared on the ship:

Yo no digo esta cancion
Sino a quien conmigo va.

I have fared on that ship and faced the storms. It seems to be moonlight now, the rippling waters sparkle, the soft breath of the music is all around me, in my ears and on my face. Dear Presences out of the past are in the air, wafted on by the waves of that melody, and their soft wings once again touch me tenderly with long echoes through the inner chambers of my heart. I feel that it is worth while to have lived since I carry

within these lovely presences, loving and beloved, out of the past, separated by Life or by Death, yet always within, ready to drop once again the soft petals of their kisses on my lips, while my unknown friends upstairs exert the magic of their strings and wires.

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1920: Last night as I lay half asleep I chanced to hear the chime of midnight, and immediately there was the blast of many sirens, harsh, discordant, monotonous, not even so modulated as it is possible for that crude instrument to be — the slow long curve of a distant ship's hoot across the water is not unpleasant — announcing the coming of a New Year.

It must surely be a chastening thought to the children of our generation that with all the vaunted triumphs of their civilisation they have yet lost so much that when they desire to express publicly the expansion of their hearts on entering a new solar cycle they have recourse, not to any solemn festival or gracious rite or lovely songs, but to the most painful and hellish noise of all the painful and hellish noises our modern industrial system has devised.

Even revelry, even religion, was surely better than this. And as I turned over again to sleep it was on the consoling thought that there are still a few people found in our day who welcome the New Year by dancing in gay costumes or kneeling in silent prayer.

JANUARY 6: Life is not worth living, I read to-day in a thoughtful article in a thoughtful journal, unless it is continued beyond death. I have read that statement so often. It seems to be an idea passionately cherished by so many people. Life is nothing to them, they think, unless they

are to live for ever. Everything else in the world is born and blossoms and grows lovely and fades and dies. They must go on for ever! To feel like that is to feel an alien in the world, to be divorced from Nature, to be to oneself a rigid and dead thing — for only such things persist, and even they undergo a constant subtle change — in a Universe that is in magnificent movement, for ever and for ever renewed in immortal youth, where there is in a deeper sense no Death because all Death is Life.

There must be strong reasons why that alien feeling is widespread among men. The result of tradition? No doubt, but of a tradition that goes far back in human history, even, it may be, in the history of earlier species of Man than ours. The Mousterian, who so carefully buried his dead, must have felt the same. It is a faith like the faith of those who believed that the sun travels round the earth, a faith so firm that no tortures were too precious to bestow on those who refused to share it.

Yet the faith in the fixity of the soul, like the faith in the fixity of the earth, will not work out even as an ideal conception. One may leave aside the question of it as a fact. As a fact we should be ready to accept it when it came, while still affirming, with the dying Thoreau: 'One world at a time, if you please!' But as an ideal it is less easy to accept than these good people think. It is not merely that to live a full and rich life in this wonderful world, among these fascinating beings, not even excluding human beings, and to fade away when — or better, before — one has exhausted all one's power of living, should surely be a fate splendid enough for the greatest. What has always come home to me is that with the dissolution of the body the reasons for desiring the non-dissolution of the soul fall away. If I am to begin a new life, let me begin it washed clean from all my defects and errors and failures in this life, freed from the disillusioning results of all my accumulated experiences, unburdened of all my sad and delicious

memories. But so to begin a new life is to annihilate the old life. The new self would be a self that is not me: what has happened to me would mean nothing to it: what happens to it can mean nothing to me.

Then again, it seems to me, and surely to many, that the supreme reason for desiring to live beyond this life is to rejoin those whom here we loved. But what would be left of them when we met again? It is the human presence of the beloved, the human weakness, the human tenderness, that are entwined round our hearts, and it is these that we crave to see and to touch again. But if they are gone — and could I be so cruel as to desire that they should be perpetuated for ever? — and if I myself no longer have eyes to see or hands to touch or a heart to throb, what can the beloved be to me or I to the beloved?

One may amuse oneself with supposing all sorts of powers of perception transcending our powers here; yet the more they transcend them the more surely they would destroy all that we now count precious, just as, it is most certain, whatever transcending powers we received on coming into the world have totally annihilated from our existence all knowledge of the powers we may or may not have possessed before we entered it.

So it seems to me that this ideal — regarded as an ideal and without reference to the question of fact, which we could deal with, if necessary, when the time came — testifies to the curious lack of imagination which, in other fields also, people so often display. When we look at it, calmly and searchingly, it fails to work out.

JANUARY 15: This evening, absorbed in my work, I suddenly become aware of nimble accomplished fingers running up and down in scales on a neighbouring piano.

It is now an accustomed sound to me nowadays, it belongs to the far past. In youth these scales were a frequent and fitting accompaniment to the routine of one's life, sometimes I used to do them myself, a dull monotonous exercise, it seemed. But it was the faint background to the dreams and aspiration of idealistic youth, just as in later working years the like monotonous musical sound, that is yet not music, of the waves on the shore, has been the background of my mental life, likewise to fall into a dreamlike past.

And now, just because they were an integral portion of that past these dull almost meaningless sounds, as they once seemed, have acquired a new significance. They have become a part of the life they were mixed with. They reappear as symbols of all that was young and tender and aspiring in the expanding soul of youth, and they reverberate along the corridors of the mind, in their old-time familiarity, with a new music that is not their own. So, for the first time, I hear these ancient scales with a personal meaning, and am touched almost to tears.

I suppose it is the privilege, or the burden, of years, that as one grows older all the world becomes ever more charged with emotion, all the fibres of one's being ever more manifoldly associated, all the nerves of one's senses more finely attuned to the vibrations that strike on them. So that in the end life would become at every moment a symphony almost too richly charged with meaning to be borne. But how amused I should once have been to know the day was to come when scales lay near to the source of tears!

JANUARY 17: I went this morning to Burlington House to see the War Pictures. There were only a few straggling visitors, though among them I found Edward Carpenter. As in the old parable, when the divine call came they all

with one consent began to make excuse. For though the Great War has ceased to be of interest as a Reality, it has only to few begun to be of interest as a Dream.

It was as a Dream that the war was presented at Burlington House. The older artists and the younger artists, each in his own individual way, have been occupied in weaving a Dream of Beauty. They have brushed away all the illusionary patriotic tunes of the Pied Pipers in every land, paid to lure the finest young men to one another's slaughter. They have brushed away all the horror and sordidness and misery which radiated from the trenches round the world. They have brushed away all those by-products of the fight which once seemed its essentials, for they seem to know as little of Victory as of Defeat. They have transmuted the Great War into Beauty, brooding tenderly over the accidental loveliness of ravaged landscapes, making delicate patterns out of the twisted bodies of mutilated men, splashing the gay crimson flame of flowers and of blood against the grey pallor of torture and death. For the artist comes before us with all the callousness of God and all the redeeming energy of Nature, for ever intent to make Life out of Death and to render to us Beauty for Ashes.

When Rome was burning Nero fiddled. It is an ancient parable which remains for ever true, with a truth to which most of us are always blind. For the burning was soon forgotten, while the memory of the fiddling is immortal. Even from the first it has been so. Our European literature begins with Homer's story of a war. That war of the Greeks and the burning of Troy had so long passed out of memory that for thousands of years, until Troy was at length uncovered, few believed it had ever been; but the fiddling of Homer has always been immortal. So it is again to-day; the Great War is becoming a dim event in history; but meanwhile our artists have fiddled.

FEBRUARY 25: After long years I enter again a new place. To be on the real sea, to inhale its exhilarating air, to smell the tar of the ship, to pace the decks, to see the casual falling stars in a clear sky, is to go back once more to youth, even if one can only go back with all the burdens the years have left. And a fortnight on the sea has brought me to a new place.

I had often heard of Malta, but nearly always as an abstraction, a Euclidian point in the British geometrical system, a post to the governorship of which military commanders were conveniently banished and from which fleets were conveniently despatched: of the concrete and intimate Malta I knew and cared nothing. Alone there remained in memory the remarks which Coleridge made concerning his stay there in that attractive book of *Table Talk* I studied in youth.

Now Malta is a real place to me. I realise its southern, rocky, arid, treeless insularity, with the occasional touches of luxuriance. I dimly make out the features of a Maltese ethnic type, arising out of a primitive Mediterranean blend tinged by more specific elements, Arabic, Italian, Spanish, or what else, a vivacious, good-natured people it seems. I perceive the Maltese woman, dignified, often beautiful, sometimes superb in old age, robed always in simple unrelieved black, with the curious black crinoline faldetta to frame the head so delightfully, altogether a new and interesting variation on the Spanish type. Now I know, too, the strong mark of the Knights of Malta, still stamped impressively on the architecture of the Island, so massive, yet so daring, and so original in ornament (where else can one see such door-knockers?) from the Auberge of Castile downwards.

Yet it is not modern Malta, not even historic Malta, of which the memory will chiefly persist. The great revelation is to me prehistoric Malta. Here I seem to discern one of the summits of the Neolithic Age. In the great and superbly

planned temples of that Age — especially perhaps Tar-Xien — lately excavated, one sees the image of a great civilisation, the reflection of high ideals, the embodiment of vast aspirations. Even those wonderful, large, finely made pots in the fascinating Museum of Valletta are in magnitude and perfection of quality beyond what one sees elsewhere. And the figures of women or goddesses with the immense emphasis on the procreative size of belly and thighs witness to the religious veneration of fertility and maternity. It seems to me that the most impressive of all the impressive things I have seen in Malta is the little Neolithic figurine of a woman who with delicate head and hands and expressive body, in a long flounced skirt, gracefully reclines on her elbow. The whole of a great period of the world's history, some ten thousand years, perhaps the most significant in the evolution of human civilisation, is summed up by that little figurine in a language we shall never decipher completely.

FEBRUARY 26: To-day, with a cosmopolitan acquaintance of shipboard, I drove to Notabile, or Citta Vecchia, as it is now commonly called, the ancient capital of Malta. When we have passed San Antonio, the Governor's country residence, with its pleasant old orange garden which I already know, we seem to be beyond the signs of English influence, and the architecture improves, with beautiful balconies to the houses and delicate plateresque porches to the churches. We pass a large, rambling peaceful building with loggias and colonnades which the driver points out as the 'House of the Foolish Men'; in England we should call it a Lunatic Asylum, though I doubt if we have any that look so pleasant to live in.

Citta Vecchia — an inland city on a height, with mighty walls and moat, and bastions which command the country

and Valletta and the surrounding seas — is the natural and securely seated capital of the island. That has always been seen; the Romans had a great city here, and up to recent times, they say, the marble remains of Roman buildings lay strewn about the streets and squares in incredible number. They are gone now, but Citta Vecchia is still a dead city. Scarcely a soul to be seen — only an occasional labourer, a few poor children, and but one visible shop, and that a wine-shop. We wandered among irregularly placed beautiful churches and private palaces, finding the architecture exquisite — my companion was an expert — and we revelled among those large, massive, beautifully proportioned buildings, with their Gothic, Moorish, Venetian, Florentine echoes, and the singularly fine and varied harmony of their windows and doors.

Then we rambled outside the city walls and finally into the Hotel Pointe de Vue, as silent as Citta Vecchia itself, but a pretty girl welcomingly opens the door to us and a careful woman in spectacles brings us a pleasant lunch with a delightful bottle of Spanish wine in the large empty dining-room, where we linger long over our meal and the coffee and our cigarettes, to enter at last the carriage where our fat and beaming driver welcomes us as though we had not kept him waiting an hour beyond the stipulated time. So I promise him an extra eighteenpence for the delay, and he beams more genially than ever as he pats me on the back, and after an hour's quick drive downhill we are once more at the Marsa Harbour and on board the *Borodino*. — To-morrow for the Piræus!

FEBRUARY 29: I have spent an hour wandering in the Old Cemetery just outside the ancient city gates on the highway to the Piræus. It was all for me alone, the

guardian was away, and no stranger entered. What indeed is there, and on such a raw windy day, to draw here the practical Greek? I, too, perhaps will never come again.

A confused and tangled and profoundly destroyed place, rough and uneven of level, as clearly it must always have been, with many cypresses waving in the gale, and a few oleanders, and mosses, and colt's-foot or other weeds. There are, too, irregular masses of varied and sometimes 'cyclopean' wall, and there are deep shafts such as one finds on Cornish moors over disused mines. Only here and there can one discern pathways, lined by the closely piled memorials of the dead, hammered, broken off, worn away — primitive tombs made of slabs, gravestones of the kind we know, funerary urns in the classic convention, vigorous figures of animals, and, above all, the beautiful reliefs such as we see in Museums, still delicately fresh. The scenes presented are, as usual, various; there may even be scenes of mortal combat to honour, doubtless, some militant youth who died in battle. But the prevailing design is a variation of the eternal situation graven on the hearts of all who lose what they love. No artists in marble or in verse have ever set forth that situation so tenderly, so graciously, so simply, so essentially as the Greeks.

In the typical scene there are two figures, a man and a woman — husband and wife, one supposes — or two women — often doubtless mother and daughter — and one is seated in a chair and the other stands as if to depart, and they clasp each other's hands. It is not, in our sense, a handshake, a last farewell to the friend who is leaving for ever. It is much more a symbol of union, the expression of an intimate communion which continues to subsist even in separation. That is what the faces reveal. They are grave and sad and tender, always perfectly composed, and the eyes of each are fixed on the other with an aching love which is yet always restrained and always resigned. These were the scenes the Athenians of the classic

age saw as they emerged from the great Dipylon on the once crowded Piræus road.

That is why I, too, a northern barbarian in whom the same emotions stir, linger here alone, amid the oleander bushes and the waving cypresses from which the Greeks have fled.

MARCH 1: I have always wanted to see Greece, and all things, it seems, come at last, even without any effort on one's own part — though they usually come too late — and so I was up by seven on the little *Borodino's* deck in the cold morning air to watch the distant misty land. Soon amid a confusion of curved hills and patches of buildings I discerned above the bank of mist the tiny Acropolis of Athens, violet-wreathed by a garland of smoke, wafted from the two black factory chimneys which are the objects that stand out most vividly from the opalescent scene as one draws near the Piræus.

Now that I have lived in Athens several days, tramping the streets slowly and deliberately, as my way is in a foreign city until it grows for ever familiar, living in cafés and restaurants, I begin to feel at home. It is not difficult, even if the weather were not still as familiarly March-like as in London. Athens seems a little provincial Paris, rather perhaps one should say, a miniature Munich, with its neat tasteful little public buildings of soft clear tone. It is amiable and inoffensive, evidently self-complacent, completely indifferent to strangers, and it likes to indicate a continuity of relationship with the ancient classic city of the same name. There are other relationships that cannot be obliterated, there is the Slav and there is the Turk, to mention no others, but it is the classic continuity that Athens would emphasise. Even the chemist across the road finds it meet to name his shop *The Pharmacy of Olympus*.

MARCH 10: The goat has always symbolised Pagan antiquity to the Christian mind. The ancients themselves seem to have discerned this significance, since they loved to present Pan and their characteristic sylvan divinities — the Satyrs of Greece and the Fauns of Italy — with the attributes of the goat. For mediæval men it was the goat that summed up all the qualities of antiquity and seemed the proper image of the Devil. In Cornwall, which is a northern land tinged by the south, with something indeed of the winter climate and the rocky soil of Attica, the goat flourishes as rarely elsewhere in the north, so that sometimes I have been startled by his beauty, that beauty with a certain strangeness, without which, as Bacon said, there is no excellent beauty, a beauty at once so virile and so shy, so emphatic and so remote, that it seemed to come to me out of the infinite past of the world.

To-day as I wandered along the Street of Athene, one of the most popular quarters of Athens, I came on the Market. I hastened to enter, for a city's Market embodies the most characteristic attitudes of the people's temperament, even its æsthetic temperament, and in Spain, indeed throughout Europe, sometimes in England, I have known such delightful Markets.

Even before I entered I caught a hideous glimpse of the outside stalls, nearly all of meat, from living sheep lying on the ground through all the disgusting processes of transformation, here revealed to the full extent of their horror, on towards the shapes that cause our mouths to water, and at the entrance the din of wildly shouting salesmen struck harshly on my ears. The paved floor is covered with slush, dripping from the copiously aspersed produce, a vague nauseous odour fills the place, on every side are carelessly flung goods, heaps of pigs' trotters, ugly little fish and slabs of dried fish, miscellaneous piles of vegetables, vast cauliflowers and unhealthy

red radishes, all at random, with complete disregard of elegance or decency, so that even the carelessly piled artichokes droop and fade on their stalks and lose their native hieratic grace. There are few women, sellers and buyers are both mostly men. Everything is ugly, sordid, often sickening.

As I gladly emerge I notice, tethered in the corner of a portico, a goat. In this feverish Bedlam it alone is silent, motionless, resigned, yet still bearing a native dignity. The eyes are cast down, they seem closed; the thoughts behind them, one imagines, are lost in memories of the far past embodied in this antique classic shape, a Pagan Christ amid the filthy rabble of brutal Christians.

MARCH 15: Close beside the large and sumptuous and commonplace Metropolitan Church of Athens, set at an acute angle to it and so minute it could easily be fitted into one of its corners, is the Small Metropolis or Church of the Panagia Gorgopiko, now two or three feet below the pavement of the city. There is never any guardian or official ministrant there, but the door is always open, and now and then a hurried young man or a stolid girl enters for a few moments and with some secret religious motive lights a taper and sticks it into the appointed brass stand. There are not many lighted tapers, for the crowd of worshippers has now forsaken this little shrine and repairs to its great modern rival.

For my part I find it hard to forsake. I never pass near without slowly wandering around it and around, maybe for half an hour at a time. (It was when so engaged that, with a shock of surprise such as once overcame Robinson Crusoe, I encountered the only authentic tourist I have seen in Athens, guidebook in hand, and he took in my little shrine with a glance of two seconds and duly passed on his way.) It is not

its architecture which renders it so fascinating, it is no lovely monument such as that of Galla Placidia at Ravenna. Merely a diminutive Byzantine Church, rather roughly constructed in the correct style of the ninth century, the earliest Byzantine building, it is said, standing on Greek soil, and far more primitive than the far earlier churches of Ravenna.

It is the material those first Christian builders of Athens used that makes this little church unique. Ten centuries ago Athens still held beautiful and scarcely ruined temples, while the ground must have been strewn with fragments of exquisite sculpture which none noted. But the builders of this little church noted them and carried some away to fit into the walls of their new church. They evidently thought them pretty, for they showed a certain barbaric taste in the positions they framed them into, placing highly wrought capitals into the angles, and a delicate frieze over the west door, taking care to carve one or two Greek crosses on it, and here and there at random they put a little funeral stele, but they were no slavish admirers of pagan antiquity, and one relief — it is certainly a specially pagan one — they set in the wall sideways without any constructional excuse. They felt more confidence, no doubt, in the merely decorative fragments of stone they put in at random, and especially, and not without justice, in the real Byzantine carvings, modern as they then were, and in their way excellent, and here we see a number of these fantastic beasts, so emphatically and absurdly and complacently following their own convention, and yet so instinct with realistic vital energy — the combination of qualities which make *Alice in Wonderland* a Byzantine achievement — and everywhere we see crosses to sanctify these dubious thefts: the plain equal-armed cross with its exaggeration, the Maltese cross (so obviously suggested by the ease with which the relief of a classic chariot-wheel can be converted into the sacred Christian emblem by cutting away the free segments that I

wonder whether that was its origin), the Latin cross, the double-armed cross now called of Lorraine; they are all repeated here again and again.

It is a little shrine of religion, a little museum of art, in which the northern barbarians sought to harmonise the conflicting ideals of two thousand years. They have been trying to do it better ever since, I among the rest.

MARCH 17: I often say to myself that the modern Greeks, however amiable, are hardly an interesting people, new-made, lacking those ancient habits and traditions which make some peoples so interesting apart from any personal quality of the individual who reveals them.

There is, however, at least one trait of the Athenians which really amuses me. I mean the habit among the men of carrying in their hands a string of amber beads, real or imitation, after the fashion of a rosary. One may see a distinguished and well-dressed old gentleman with his hand held in front of him and from it the string of yellow beads quietly pendent. More often the beads are in constant motion, especially when carried by men of the lowest middle class, which seems the class most apt for this habit. All the time as they walk these men are nervously and automatically counting the beads backwards and forwards on the string. Sometimes a man will join his hands behind his back and waggle the beads at the place where some of our better-endowed fellow-creatures carry a tail, so that I am reminded of my own ancient desire to possess such an organ of expression for the emotions that are too subtle, or not subtle enough, for words.

It is a wonderful discovery, though not, it seems, of the Greeks, for I understand that it is an Arab custom. I know that if I live much longer in Athens I also shall not be happy until I have a string of amber beads. I know also exactly how

I shall prefer to carry them. Already my fingers are feeling for the beads that are not there. And to-day as I wandered through the fascinating Old Bazaar, the most genuinely Oriental corner of Athens, a young dealer ran out of his box-like shop, eagerly asking what I would like, and pointed, as though he divined my desire, precisely to a beautiful string of amber beads, for which he demanded three hundred drachmas. But with seeming indifference I heroically repelled his advances and passed on.

MARCH 20: How familiar it all seems! That is the first inner exclamation of a certain disappointment on coming into contact with Greek antiquity in Athens. One has been seeing it, reproduced or degraded, all one's life. One has already accepted all the traditional estimates, or remained indifferent when they clashed with one another. I suppose it is possible to come to Athens and go away in that faith, to die in it peacefully at last.

I have seen it all before! Yet, as from time to time I leave the bright little city of Athens to grope patiently among all these shattered and scattered fragments, I begin to realise that it is not so. I have seen nothing of it before!

I began to realise this dimly, before I had been a week in Athens, while I sat long before the little ancient statuette which copies the huge elephantine statue of Athena Phidias made for the Parthenon, and developed the repulsion I felt for that heavy figure absurdly overladen with all the conventional attributes of the tutelary deity. It is one of the master's supreme achievements, and I had taken for granted the impressions of other people, impressions that were not mine, nor made for me, nor in any degree fitted for me, people doubtless too akin, Puritanic northern barbarians cloistered in colleges, who had bound me up in their own narrow traditions. Before

the liberating Athena of Phidias I obscurely felt the fetters falling away.

Now, as the weeks go by, I begin to know more definitely what suits me. I am happier before the Erechtheion than the Parthenon; the broken fragments of the frieze of the Wingless Nike, only to be reconstructed by the creative imagination, but so playfully daring and with such accomplished ease, fascinate me even more than the gracious solemn conventions of Phidias; the little out-of-the-way museum on the Acropolis is a greater revelation than the famous National Museum, even though that holds the Eleusinian relief, which may well remain more deeply printed in memory than anything I have seen in Athens. I approach with joy the 'triple-bodied demon' with his merry lustful eyes and his full cheeks and his three green beards, and the bodies which cease to be human in a huge coiled snake banded with green and red; the God Tritopatores, they call him, adored of young married women, bringing with him, even to the beginning of the seventh century B.C., the gay realistic vigour of the Minoan age not yet refined away into the age-long pale procession of graceful conventions. I wander with untiring delight in the little rooms beyond to embrace with my eyes all these archaic women figures dug out of the Acropolis in recent years — who knows who these Korai were? — mutilated but so fresh, so intimately alive, with their red hair and their smiles more subtle and varied than Monna Lisa's, and all the delicate Ionian detail of their close-woven green undergarments and the stained embroidered hems of their robes. Here at last I am at home in Greece.

So it is that amid the wonderful confused distressing mass of ancient defaced fragments — often commonplace but sometimes exquisite — the soft clear dawn of Greece breaks slowly on my mind. It is better, far better, to cultivate one's own taste, however bad, than to affect the taste, however good, of

other people. My values are revalued. I follow my own instincts, I see with my own eyes.

MARCH 21: This keen March Sunday morning, as I went for the last time up to the deserted Acropolis, once the sacred centre of the city's life, I noticed on the slope opposite the Areopagus hillock the rich dark crimson poppies blooming among the wild oats and barley in ear. In the afternoon, as the day grew softer, I sat under the trees in the Royal Palace Garden where birds sang, the kin of our English birds, and a pleasant home-feeling came over me as I recalled how I have felt the same thrill of Spring in many a beloved English haunt in May or early June. And at evening as I wandered among the cheerful, good-humoured Sunday crowd, mostly men as usual, filling the busy streets that lead into the Omonoia Square, I chanced to glance, as they never glance, to the twilight sky, and stood entranced to watch the exquisite vision of the new moon, a delicate little vessel of pale brilliancy floating on the soft sunset sky.

A singular bare stony land, this land of Greece, scarred by earthquakes, devastated by men in war and in peace, scorched by the sun, its houses and its few rivers alike dyed by mud: it is on this background that the rare flashes of loveliness made so penetrating an appeal, alike to the northern visitor and the Greek, even the Greek of classic days. To read some of the old Greek poets one would think Greece must be a land of beauty where it is always spring. Yet the northerner has at one point an advantage over the ancient Greek, for he is peculiarly sensitive to the delicious charm of atmosphere which to the ancient Greek was so familiar he could hardly see it, though in it lay the real beauty of Greece.

It is a delicate air this of Greece, at all events of Athens, with a luminous moisture in it, and yet a lovely transparency.

Its effects are not crude; one may see more gorgeous sunsets elsewhere, even in Greece, yet I know not where else such a soft clear radiancy. This atmosphere of Greece brings me nearer to the ancient glory of its land than the swarming little city, or the rocky landscape, or even the melancholy desolation of its ruins.

MARCH 25: I sat at the Café placed pleasantly in the sea, round the lighthouse at the end of the pier which is also the wharf, at Patras, this city, else so sordid, which is set in a natural panorama so magnificent at sunset. An Italian ship with her burden of passengers was just unmooring to put out to sea, and a sad-faced Greek from a little table near me was waving his handkerchief to two friends, a man and a woman, who stood in the stern, also waving, until gradually the ship grew dim in the distance. I was reminded, as I gazed, of a scene in my own life, now sad with the memory of things that can never return, and so was led on to think of the mental difference that must ever lie between the beginning of one's life and the end. I have often thought of that difference in regard to reading — the difference between eager swift receptive youth and slow richly burdened mature age — so that as the years go on the less one reads and the more one thinks.

Now I seem to see that that difference is but an indication of the whole difference in the mental and emotional processes of childhood and age. In childhood we have but few associations; there is nothing to clog the progress alike of thought and of feeling. The clean, fresh, smooth-bottomed ship cleaves swiftly the ocean of life. But years pass, and the whole surface has become covered, covered with the living things it has gathered in its progress through the sea, and movement becomes ever slower and slower.

So it is that now, whatever I do and wherever I am, even in

this sordid Patras, every little incident, as I move through life, is full of meaning. I am weighted and held back by memories. I move ever more slowly through an ocean no longer empty and cold and dull, but alive, alive with all the clinging joys and sorrows of my passage.

MARCH 30: I left my pleasant hotel, still reminiscent of Austria, over the sea at Trieste, early in the morning for I was told that while the Orient Express, in which I had duly booked the first vacant place two days ahead, was just now the only reliable train passing through Italy, no one knew when it would arrive, so one must be in good time in case by some unexpected chance it should be punctual. I was there before seven and having placed my small baggage in the care of the ticket inspector at the exit to the trains, for I was warned against the insecurity of the Deposito, I spent the wait of four hours wandering round to observe the emigrating peasants who streamed in slowly with all their possessions in variegated ancient trunks and wrappings to settle down in the large station-hall until the uncertain period when their train might be ready; many indeed had evidently spent the night there, meek and patient, just like the crowd of Greek peasants, young and old, whom I had seen a few days ago arriving on the wharf at Patras, with their furniture and their household goods and their goats and their fowls, to camp for the night until the boat that was to bear them away arrived in the morning. It is what is happening all over Europe to-day with the re-making of the map, and the presence of new economic conditions.

I realised this more acutely after leaving Trieste. At first I noticed casually that all along the line there were ruins, silent, deserted, without a sign of inhabitants, and not a single house anywhere intact, it seemed the ancient remains of habitations

of former days. So I thought they were. Then I quickly understood that these ruins, already more silent and more ravaged than Pompeii, were really a recent devastation, the outcome of the long death-struggle between Italy and Austria for Trieste. But Trieste itself had seemed so cheerful and reposeful, save for the strange quietude of its vast and magnificent docks and the procession of peasants to the railway station, that I was unprepared for the immense desolation of destruction I now passed through. The scene changed, after Mestre was left behind. I felt in this neighbourhood of Venice even more than ever before, that here I was in a land of painters, a land of great colourists, made such by the inevitable circumstances of their life. Every common house was a picture, the splashes of colour on it, thrown there, it seemed, by an accomplished artist; at every curve of the route some rich and balanced composition appeared, fit as it stood to be transferred to canvas. All this ceased at Vicenza, and, even if I had not known it, I saw that here I had reached a real frontier. I was no longer in a painter's paradise, however pleasant the land; no great colourist could be born at Vicenza: it is rightly the home of Mantegna and Palladio. I passed Verona and Brescia and skirted the Lago di Garda into the great city of Milan. Then the scene began to be lost in gloom. Soon I was asleep in my little bunk, only to be awakened for a few moments by the Swiss official who investigated my baggage and claimed five francs of good Swiss money for the privilege of passing through his land. I saw no more, and was never even conscious of the Simplon Tunnel. I awoke in the charming familiar land of France, to reach Paris in the afternoon.

Never before have I flitted so swiftly across Europe, and the passing vision of the great expanse of varied land has been full of delicious memories of the past, blended with a touch of melancholy, for that past can never live again, and it seemed

that I was being vouchsafed one last swallow's glimpse over a world that I was leaving for ever.

I do not complain. I am well content. And for two months I have been eagerly absorbing new sensations and gaining new insights into things I have desired to know for nearly half a century. I have basked in the sunshine, I have been inspirited and invigorated by lovely air, and since all our experiences, even to the end, must be blended with due incongruity, I find that while my baggage was in the care and under the eye of that genial Italian railway official my umbrella was carefully abstracted from the rug-strap.

APRIL 2: For ten years or so I have been inclined to avoid Paris, and when I could not avoid it, to spend there but a few hours, making it merely my jumping-board for larger leaps into less familiar regions. It somehow seemed no longer to concern me, and no longer even to interest me. Now, although, with all the world, I am feeling more alien from the prevailing national mood of France than I have ever felt since I began to know France at all, I linger here day after day, wishful to linger still.

Never has Paris seemed so beautiful to me, never have I felt more appreciatively near to its people. Every step I take along its streets, above all in this Latin Quarter I have trodden for over thirty years, I marvel at its familiarity; every yard of it seems known to me, every landmark I recognise, every shop that has changed its character I miss. I realise how richly memory is stored with old pictures, neglected, it may be, but still ready to come to the surface at the challenge of their living counterparts that correspond, or that now cease to correspond.

I realise, too, as I gaze at the lofty antique houses that still stand as of old in Paris, or as I walk in ecstasy at evening by

the river, how it is that, whatever indifference to the world one may helplessly acquire or carefully cultivate with the growth of years, there comes no indifference to beauty, and the older I grow the more sensitive I become to the loveliness of things, the more entranced in their contemplation.

And with that comes also, as often before, the realisation that this enhanced sensitiveness is of itself nothing. It is simply part of the deeper and more enriched experiences of life with which one is ever more laden as the years go by. For the joy of Paris, and the beauty of it, I find now, since I last came here, are heightened by the gravity of old memories that make Paris a sacred place to me, peopled with visions that will never turn to life, echoing with the rhythm of little eager feet that will tread it no more.

APRIL 10: I spent an afternoon before leaving Paris at the old Hôtel de Biron where the almost complete work of Rodin is now admirably displayed. What here interested me most was the final development of his art in the last sculptures of his old age, because this was new to me; he had not reached that stage when I saw him at work in the little studio in a remote district of Paris, where at that time he sought seclusion, far from the showplace in the Rue de l'Université. These things have a distinct character of their own as a group. They are effaced, the details are smoothed out, as it were washed away by the action of running water, so that only the largest and simplest harmonies of line and form remain. The effect is well seen in 'Ariane' and the bust of Lady Warwick. It is really the same liquid quality — *morbidezza* they call it — which is now recognised as a trait of the Alexandrian School of Old Greek sculpture, and it gives so subtle a charm to that work; but Rodin has pushed it to an extreme which the Greeks would have thought inconceivable.

With this final development the large sweep of Rodin's art was completed. There was no further development possible. He began as a minute realist and in that early stage his work even caused offence because it was said to be merely photographic. Then, during the greater and most active part of his career, he developed his characteristic style of deliberate exaggeration, the heightening of natural proportions for the ends of art, the play of light and shade. Finally that stage, too, passed away, and this last period arrived of large simple masses, softened and alleviated of all semblance to reality, gliding into a vast dim dream.

Have not all the supreme artists tended to follow a like course? Not the lesser artists, the artists of talent, for they seem with the progress of years to be seeking ever further to emphasise the vision of the world which they set out to present. But look at Michelangelo, whose development among great sculptors we can best follow. In that little chapel in Florence devoted to the last stage of his art, one of the shrines of the creative human spirit, we seem to see the marble itself bursting into a life so significant because not completely disentangled out of the obscure depths of Nature from which it draws that life.

But it is not only among artists in this medium that we find the same course of development. It is still clearer to see among painters. I think of the marvellous picture of Titian's old age at Munich in which the splendours of that master's earlier works are forgotten in the attainment of a subdued and clouded glory which rises to still greater heights. I think of Rembrandt, whose art reached its climax as it passed away in the golden haze which, to memory, seems to fill the Hermitage. I think of the fascinating pictures of Hals's old age at Haarlem which, in place of the superb bravura of his earlier years, have almost the semblance of awkward crudity, and yet, as I recall them, live with so vivid a power that I forget

the work of his youth. I think of Turner, whose early genius of the earth, sober and sombre, leapt up to heaven at last in mist and flame: of Carrière — if he may be included in this noble company—who began so precisely and ended with those vast figures that seem to come to us out of the world of dreams.

Nor is it in painting only. It is also in poetry. Look at the last plays of Shakespeare, so loose and undramatic, so flowing or so broken, so full of exquisite music of the spirit more than of poetic form, of a heavenly atmosphere refined beyond any that was ever breathed on earth and yet so humanly tender; or at Shelley, who completed a large cycle of art in a short time, and wrote at last, in the 'Witch of Atlas,' only with water and fire; or, within a yet greater and yet shorter cycle, trace the evolution of the ideals of Keats.

The critics have always stumbled a little over this final phase of supreme genius. They used to think that Michelangelo's last work was unfinished. They still often think that what we must recognise in such a manifestation is lassitude, failure of energy, a weakening grasp of brain or hand. I am not sure that there is not an element of truth in such criticism. Only let us not forget that it is the mark of high genius, less to display athletically Titanic strength than to be able to use weakness to reach divine ends. That power, it may well seem to us, is supremely visible in the typical last phase of the highest genius. The artist has lost his early power of realistic grip, and with it lost also his early taste for such power. But he has lost it only to attain a wider and deeper and more symbolic mastery of the world. He no longer cares for the mere literal imagery of a scene he will leave so soon. But he cares more than he has ever before cared for its essence, and he is conscious of that essence with a delicacy of sensitive perception he never before possessed. He is no longer concerned with things; they are receding from his view. As he rises above the earth, like Elijah in his chariot of fire, he now sees it only in

the distance. Henceforth he no longer deals with things. It is the soul of things that he brings before us. That is why his later work fascinates us endlessly as, slowly, after many years, enlightened by the long course of our own experience, we begin at last to understand what it means.

APRIL 20: Last night I went to the Bach Choir Festival, a crowded but silent gathering of devoted musicians, and possibly I was the least musical person there. It was in the Westminster Central Hall, and so I was able to ascertain that this Hall is as ugly and depressing inside as it is outside; so also the man next to me thought, and he expounded the theory that modern buildings should always be constructed underground, to minimise their ugliness. I found myself frequently closing my eyes in order to shut out this incongruous background to the music of Bach.

The programme was mainly choral, and as I listened there was still echoing in my memory the sound of those wonderful voices in the Russian Church at Athens, those Russian voices which, in their modulated precision, in their delicacy and their depth, make one feel that the human voice, even in a choir, may become really an instrument. The Bach Choir sounds rough and crude beside the recollection of any good Russian choir. So all the greater is the triumph of Bach in dominating so imperfect a medium. Indeed, the chief moments of the performance, at all events those which seemed chiefly to concern me, were when the voices became the sole instrument: the three motets. It is not quite clear to me what a motet is. It appears to mean in the original Latin a mutter or grunt; then, in the course of ages, it became a merry ditty, of too gay a character to be counted sacred, and was explicitly banned by the Church; finally it developed strangely into a method of expressing an exalted joy.

Again, as so often before, I found myself comparing Bach and Beethoven, both at times so superb in the accomplishment of their gigantic tasks, Beethoven hammering at his theme as though he were an early worker of the Bronze Age, moulding it deliberately, at times with such care and such technically skilled fingers that every inch of the surface is beautiful; and Bach, who seems to create music as the Hebrew God created the world on the first day, performing stupendous tasks with the ease of so perfect a joy that for him no seventh day of rest seems needed. Beethoven, however much I may rebel against him, pierces more poignantly, more exquisitely, to the tenderest spots of the soul, but always disturbingly, for the joy that he discerns is a remotely achieved joy to which he will never attain. His tapestry may be woven in heaven, but we feel that he has spun the thread of it in hell. Bach lives always in the childish gaiety of heaven, and so he fills us with a serene and profound satisfaction that remains unalloyed. The mark of his music is exhilaration, an exhilaration that penetrates to the farthest recesses of one's being. When I came out of the Central Hall, I felt as though I were dancing along the pavements of Westminster, and it seemed that but a little more and I should leap as I walked, just as I was wont to do when I was a child.

MAY 14: 'How is Religion still possible?' This question is posed by so able a thinker as Dr. Merz as the question of paramount importance, and he can only find a paradoxical answer.

It is a question which still seems to be taken seriously by many otherwise intelligent persons who are thereby stranded in the end on all sorts of hidden sandbanks. They do not ask: How is Walking still possible? They do not ask: How is Hunger still possible? Yet it is really the same kind of question.

It is always marvellous to find how people worry themselves over unnecessary problems and spin the most fantastic webs of abstruse speculation around even the simplest things. Religion, if it is anything at all, must be a natural organic function, like walking, like eating, better still, one may say, like loving. For the closest analogy, and indeed real relationship, of religion, is with the function of reproduction and the emotions of sex. The functions of walking and eating are more or less necessary to life in their rhythmic recurrence, and it is legitimate in their absence to endeavour to stimulate them into action. But the function of religion, like that of love, is not necessary to life, nor may it with any certainty be stimulated into activity. Need it? These functions are either working within you or they are not. If not, then it is clear that your organism is in no need of them at the present moment, and perhaps is born without the aptitude to experience them. And if so, there are those who will tell you that you represent a superior type of humanity. Therefore whether if not so, or whether so, why worry?

I do not, indeed, myself think that the inaptitude for the function of religion — ancient as the religious emotions are — represents a higher stage of development. But I am sure that either the function is there or it is not there, and that no intellectual speculations will take its place or hasten its manifestation. Religion, like love, develops and harmonises our rarest and most extravagant emotions. It exalts us above the commonplace routine of our daily life, and it makes us supreme over the world. But, like love also, it is a little ridiculous to those who are unable to experience it. And since they can survive quite well without experiencing it, let them be thankful, as we also are thankful.

MAY 16: I find that when I remark to a musician that the violin is not a woman's instrument, he agrees emphatically, apparently accepting the statement as too incontrovertible to need argument. Yet to me it seems that the fact that I — and apparently others also — often find it hard to experience complete satisfaction at the spectacle of a woman with a violin needs some explanation, and conversely, also, the fact that, to me at all events, the spectacle of a man with a violoncello causes a corresponding dissatisfaction.

It seems the reverse of what one would expect. The smaller instrument, one would unthinkingly say, must be the woman's, the larger one the man's, and when one reaches a monstrosity like the double-bass, so it may be. But there are other points to be noted. A high muscular tension and nervous adjustment are required in at once holding and bowing and fingering a violin. The perfect master shows a triumphant ease and joy in the attainment of this mastery, his instrument seems almost a part of himself, his tension has put on flexibility and grace; so that it is good even to look at him as he plays. To refer only to the past, I remember how unforgettably a young and eager god Sarasate looked — I mean in early days before he acquired the heavy and sodden air of his later years — as he faced and challenged, it seemed, his audience. But the woman violinist, however well she may play, so often looks rigid and strained; she reminds one of the second-rate strong man of the music-halls, who, indeed, performs the feat, but at such an obvious cost one wishes he had attempted something less. For, whatever the art may be — whether playing at music or playing at life — there is no mastery until ease is attained.

The 'cello has not to be similarly supported, and the 'cellist sits in the attitude of apparent repose which suits a woman. A man usually looks a little awkward with a 'cello between his

knees, like a man nursing a baby. It appears to demand no exorbitant muscular effort; but to respond to it emotionally is what a man can with difficulty do in the 'cellist's attitude without looking a little ridiculous, although he can triumphantly do so in the violinist's. So it is that most of the famous women who play the violin cultivate a coldly professional air, but not the men; and so also most of the famous men who play the 'cello, but not the women.

I realise it afresh this evening as I watch Guilhermina Suggia playing Schumann's rather mysteriously beautiful violoncello concerto. Leaving aside the question of technical achievement, the emotional response to her instrument is more sensitive than a man's can well be. The instrument seems to become part of herself. Her movements are larger and freer, with all the charm of skill combined with instinct; her enraptured Oriental face is lighted with a joyous smile. The vision answers to the music. These considerations are not relevant? Well, so be it. — *Andiamo*.

MAY 28: I am frequently brought up against the contempt of ritual in life. It is a widespread feeling, most usually, of course, directed against religion, especially, among ourselves, that of the Catholic Church, in its ancient and fantastic, seemingly absurd and unnatural shapes. When in the last century the Evangelicals invented the term 'Ritualistic' for a kind of ritual they disliked, they felt sure they were appealing to a sound common-sense principle of life.

Yet all social life is ritualistic. You cannot walk along the street or enter a house without observing a ritual which you could not violate without an overwhelming sense of guilt. A child has not yet grown up to the sense of ritual. Imagine yourself doing in public the things a child does! Human

society, as much that of the savage as of the civilised, seems, in practice, if not in theory, impossible without ritual, however we may have simplified it, or conventionalised it, from its primitively more elaborate and sacredly significant forms. The ancient Chinese, who had so profound a feeling for the essential things of life, based morals on ceremony and music. It is impossible to construct even Utopia without ritual, however novel a ritual it may be, and even Thelema was an abbey.

It is not only society, it is all life, that is full of ritual, ancient and fantastic, seemingly absurd and unnatural ritual, that is indeed moulded into the very shape of life. Where can we find such wildly and diversely extravagant embodiments of ritual as in the greenhouses of Kew or the cages of the Zoo? For Nature is herself the maker of ritual. We are all ritualists, carrying out rites so widely diverse that we cannot enter into the spirit of one another's ritual. Yet, whether devised by Nature's direct mechanistic action or through the human brain, it is all the manifestation of an underlying vital meaning. The diversity of the world, therefore, is natural. Yet not less natural is this inability to accept its own diversity. It is by limitation — the limitation which all art involves — that Nature becomes diverse, fantastic, seemingly artificial. It is by the same limitation that these diverse forms cannot accept each other. I recall the critical, disdainful gaze of a small terrier as he stood still to watch a great goose pass by. Let us therefore accept with joy the diversity of the world, and with equal joy its inability to accept its own diversity. For that also is delightful.

JUNE 2: If it were permitted me to revisit the earth for a brief period every year, I would desire it to be the region around London, where I was born, where, I sup-

pose, more of my life has been spent than elsewhere, and I would have the time be about the first week in June.

That week, it seems to me, is most likely to be, in this climate, the fairest week of the year. Then the days are warm, and yet it is delicious to lie in the sun; the trees are in full leaf, which still has not lost its virginal freshness, nor has wild music ceased to burden every bough; the sky and frail flowers of spring — tremulous with fear of keen winds and falling snows — are passed away; it is the season when the stellaria, which has ever been my flower among wild flowers, has formed its perfect goblet of fine texture, while the rich flowers of stronger growth are everywhere opening with daring confidence in a summer to come. All is ecstasy.

So I meditate as I wander through the lanes and meadows of this unfamiliar remote corner of a near and familiar land, and gaze with rapture at the first full-blown wild rose in the hedge, so exquisitely fragile, so serenely self-assured.

JUNE 25: One of my first memories is of Margate, and the single impression that constitutes it is a small tower, a Martello tower, I suppose, which evidently intrigued my childish mind. The place must have changed since then about as much as my receptivity. I seem to recall hearing Margate spoken of as though it were the complete embodiment of vulgarity. Yet to-day, as I walk along its front at low water, and pause a little to the west of the old jetty where the fluted pillar-like lighthouse stands, Margate, with a touch of gaiety in its colour and its bright light, more than any place I have seen on this Kentish coast seems made to give joy to the artist. Again and again I have caught glimpses of delight, little completed pictures. Here the whole broad scene is a picture of delight. Close on the right the battered skiffs, with their rich brown half-furled sails, lying on the rippling

pale milky-green water against the high jetty wall of such softly variegated tones, present a vision of ancient peace for which our æsthetic sensibility has been trained by the great painters of Holland and East Anglia. The sun plays on the water, on the beautiful level expanse of sand, and on the black-green sea-weeded rocks of the foreshore, an essential note in the picture, but far to east the weary wings of the mist droop and brood over melancholy waters, and in the distance throw a fairy veil over the projecting foreland, while, to frame the scene, behind me the dull dun row of houses lies along the front.

Yet the whole scene would be empty if it were not for the people. I realised that when I came here for an hour at the same season three years ago, when air-raids had swept the east coast clear; I felt alone on a melancholy shore and swiftly fled to seek some spot where solitude is more natural. These people scarcely seem to bear close inspection, though doubtless if one stripped them of their clothes one might still see revealed the grace of the beautiful compasses which have measured the world, and if one pierced beneath the skin still perhaps find within some real individual human soul. But regarded simply as splashes of more or less bright colour, scattered by the happy hand of Divine Chance over the whole picture, they are perfectly right. They give life and movement to that picture; they are woven into the underlying elements in an exquisite and rhythmic web, the harmonious union of the warp of Art with the woof of Nature, which I scarcely seem to see achieved in the same way elsewhere on this English coast.

JULY 12: I note that Garcia Calderon in his excellent book on Latin America seems passinglly to suggest that he regards Ariel and Caliban together as the symbolic re-

presentative of the English spirit, much as we may regard Don Quixote and Sancho Panza together as the complete representative of the Spaniard. Whether in the vast jungle of Shakespearian commentary this idea has ever been worked out, I have no knowledge; it may have been, even to the last detail. At all events, it seems an idea that is worth bearing in mind. Most nations present two totally unlike aspects. A nation that failed to do so would probably fail also to play any great part in the world.

Of no people could this be more emphatically said than of the English. Napoleon, like other observers before and since, said that the English are a nation of shopkeepers. To yet some others they have seemed a nation of singing birds. On the one hand, as so many foreigners have stated, often with a touch of contempt, practical, cold, short-sighted, cautious, hard-headed, grasping, unimaginative; on the other hand, as they have said just as often and with a touch of enthusiasm, idealistic, humanitarian, daring, adventurous, extravagant, high-pitched, imaginative. In reality we are both; so it has come about that Caliban has given us an Empire (as indeed the Spanish American remarks) and Ariel a Shakespeare. It is, in fact, the combination of those two elements which produces the characteristically English quality, what is unsympathetically called cant or humbug being the inevitable outside manifestation of their union. They may even be united in the same person, and our most ethereal poets have been well able and content to earn their living by keeping a shop, or preaching sermons, or carrying out the most varied and tedious round of official duties; Caliban is the materialistic aspect of our Ariel, Ariel the spiritual aspect of our Caliban.

The achievement of Shakespeare — however instinctive and unconscious it may have been — in thus finally embodying and symbolising the English Genius adds a further seal to

the fascination of *The Tempest*. Nowadays I am not much drawn to read the plays of Shakespeare. Their extravagance no longer attracts me; the fury of their passionate interest in life ceases to be of much concern as one recedes from the combat of life. But I am more and more drawn to *The Tempest*, and my thoughts are often lingering over its loveliness. Here Shakespeare has emerged from the conflict, even though it may possibly have been by shipwreck; he had passed beyond tragedy and beyond comedy, beyond and above to a serene air in which they could at last be seen as one by the magician Prospero, who is the final embodiment of Shakespeare's inner self. Prospero's return to his dukedom was a weak concession to a stage convention. One knows that in his heart Shakespeare also knew that Prospero would never return. For an earthly dukedom can mean nothing to the man who has finally grasped the whole universe in his vision, as an evanescent mist, and stands serenely on the last foothold and ultimate outlook of the world.

AUGUST 6: The train stopped for a long time — for everything here is uncertain now — at Kenmare, and a girl of some sixteen years stood on the platform near our third-class compartment, a simple country girl. When she turned her face towards us I saw the most dazzling and heavenly eyes that I have ever seen anywhere in the world. They were blue, and their quality of almost abstract loveliness was immensely enhanced by rather thick black eyebrows. When those wondrous eyes were directed towards one, all the rest of her form seemed to become invisible. It was only when she turned aside that I was able to observe that, apart from this rare combination — it used to be called the Celtic type by anthropologists, but I have seen it nowhere else so pronounced in the south of Ireland — she was just

a simple pleasant brown-haired girl, and not, as it seemed when one gazed at those eyes, a visitant from some other sphere.

She evidently noticed my admiring gaze, and she leisurely entered our compartment, with her little packages and a newspaper. But she was shy. She glanced for a few moments at her paper and then she stood up and looked out of the further window. The next station, Kilgarvan, was hers, and the platform was on our side. It was my privilege to open the door for her. She murmured a shy 'Thank you' and swiftly disappeared. But the memory of those eyes will always remain.

AUGUST 8: The red-bricked house, once an earl's home, is now a mere shell, burnt out just before the War, and left since untouched, with all that surrounds it, on this height whence one overlooks, as nowhere else so well, the Lakes of Killarney and the hills beyond. There are terraces in the Italian manner, and formal gardens of box-trees in the Dutch manner, and little summer-houses, and great trees on the slopes behind. Now Nature is adding her own wild beauty to the beauty that Man made, and this deserted spot appeals to us as no spot on our course through this island, unless perhaps Glengariff, has yet appealed. Here we resolve to celebrate the rites of our Sunday in Ireland.

There are no tourists nowadays. At long intervals some stray local visitor appears, lingers a few moments, departs. For the rest, this lordly domain is ours alone, through all the morning hours, as we walk side by side up and down the terraces or sit together in some neglected arbour, and I taste at leisure the joy of this delicious presence, which for so long has been only a dream in memory, and awhile we read aloud and discuss some poem of Donne, and linger in frank dis-

course of life and of death, of all the possibilities the universe may hold. For we know that here we have reached one of the rare summits of existence, and our hearts uncurl like flowers and lean together, to shed each on the other its sweetest perfume.

Again, as the afternoon wears away, we ascend our sacred height, to inhale together the most exquisite moment of the day in the little shelter consecrated by the chalice of our communion. Soon the parting sun throws on the hills a golden radiancy — faint reminiscence of the sun-smitten Acropolis — and as the twilight deepens and chills we too leave with entwined arms. But we both know that the departing day is graven on our hearts.

NOVEMBER 19: When I was living in Athens I could see, well framed by my window, above the sculptured buildings of University Street, the chapel-crowned height of Lycabettos. It is the only imposing height close to Athens, but the Greeks, who loved little things, made much of the Acropolis and of still more insignificant rocks and hillocks around, and scarcely seem so much as to have seen Lycabettos, which they were content to leave for the purpose of astronomical observation. So that when I went to Athens it came upon me with surprise that I had, it seemed, never so much as heard the name of the only real Athenian hill.

I soon learned to love Lycabettos better, and feel more at home there, than any place else in Athens. One has a fine view from that height over city and sea and distant mountains. And one is at peace, and free to enjoy one's own society. For though an eccentric native may sometimes find his way up there, the ordinary practical Greek — evidently in this respect, at all events, at one with the Greek of antiquity — sees no reason whatever for wasting his time by labor-

iously climbing up a hill that leads nowhere. Moreover, Lycabettos in various of its characteristics singularly reminded me of Cornwall, and as I reclined through the day on its slopes, beneath the pleasant March sunshine of Attica, with my papers and my books, I would often pause to dream of ancient lost days in Cornwall.

Now, after an interval of five years — a short interval, it may seem, but long enough to bridge eternity — I am really once more in Cornwall. It is not, indeed, the Cornwall that I knew, this northern stretch of coast depending on Padstow, but a Cornwall with various new shades of difference. Here the rock is slate, so that Nature plays at being a Cubist — as the artist friend I am staying with here cannot fail to note — and builds up the cliffs with random oblong striated blocks, polished black or dun in colour, now and then veined with marble or splashed with yellow lichen. The cliffs are soft, of friable and more recent shale, but slate is ancient and hard (as those know who have ever sought the remains of their ancestors in old churchyards and been lucky enough to find them beneath inscribed tombs of slate), so that all sorts of fantastic rock shapes and rock bridges and porched caves, in what Pepys would have called the 'romantic' style, may here be found as nowhere else in Cornwall. At all events I do not know where else the rocks are so hard, or the cliffs so rugged, or the waves that beat against rocks and cliffs, to break in such varied clouds of spray even when the sea seems calm, so endlessly attractive to watch.

Now is the time of year when Cornwall has often seemed to me loveliest. The air is soft, inspiring to spirit as well as to lungs. The sun is warm and as long as it stays in a cloudless sky I, too, can stay here, feeling my cheeks tingle with its chemical warmth as I write. Now, too, the butterfly visitors of the summer season have long since all fluttered away, and since there are few inhabitants here, and no railway or other

method of public locomotion within five miles, I may count all the splendour of the coast my own and wander about for hours without seeing a single person, scarcely a sign even of civilisation, so that I must sometimes remove my shoes and socks to cross a stream because there is neither ford nor bridge.

Yet, while this region has its own traits, it is still, as I know in my nerves and see with my eyes, the Cornwall with which the greater part of my active life on earth has been inextricably blended. As I recline on the untouched sands and the waves creep up towards my feet, influences come out of the past to wrap me round and round. I am within the circle of a sacred halo iridescently woven of sadness and joy, of tenderness and peace.

NOVEMBER 23: I have brought down with me to this sunny cove — where all day long I may remain undisturbed by any foot save of the gulls on the sands or the crows on the cliff above — the beautiful and individual little commonplace book of choice things, prose and verse, familiar and unfamiliar, which Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate, published in 1915. A poet of so high a quality, a connoisseur of such fine taste, a man of such lofty impulse, so lifted by noble contemplation over the passions of the herd, it is a rare pleasure to brood reverently on the pages of this Anthology, wayward and exquisite.

But I read the Preface — and with a shock of horror. This esoteric poet and scholar, this high-minded recluse, securely perched, one imagined, on a summit of the spirit far removed from the base passions of the mob, reveals himself as the most pharisaic of self-righteous Jingoese, as a war-monger of the kind we associate with our popular gutter-press, as the inspired prophet of Hysteria. Here are the familiar catchwords

and counters and despicably one-sided accusations which have rendered the Great War for ever nauseous. No single glimmer of a suspicion that what he says of the Germans may perhaps also be said of their English cousins, no perception that the cold-blooded atrocities of the blockade easily outweigh those committed in hot blood, no insight to see that the frightfulness of the Germans in Belgium is put into the shade by the more ruthless and more reckless frightfulness of our 'heroes and saints' in Ireland, against men and women and children who were not remote foreigners speaking an unknown tongue, but of our own nation and speech, inflicting physical and moral wounds of which I saw the fresh traces every morning three months ago. This Preface to *The Spirit of Man* is fit to be held in memory as a monument to the imbecility of that Spirit under the influences of war even when embodied in the person of a superior man; for there are times, said Carlyle of old, though he might have said it to-day, when the creed of persons in authority — and surely Bridges is among us a person in spiritual authority — becomes either a Machiavellism or an Imbecility.

No doubt the Poet Laureate has since repented in sack-cloth. He has, indeed, of late been distinguished by encouraging others to hold out the hand of friendship to Germany. But it is easy even for the ordinary man to be just and humane, as well as wise, after the event, let alone a man who is able to present, as in this book, the antidote to the poisons he himself exhibits. So, although it may seem unkind to refer to the past, the occasion is profitable for meditation. We are told nowadays that the Herd Instinct, which has proceeded so far as to mould large isolated nations, will in course of time proceed yet farther and attain the form of a Universal Herd Instinct, embracing all Humanity; but our movements towards that end are likely to be excessively slow when we realise the state of mind of even our Superior Persons. Cer-

tainly long before that consummation it would seem likely that we and all the generations of our civilisation will have disappeared in the Pit. Well, it is certainly no more than we deserve. Let us depart smiling. There are others to come.

DECEMBER 10: It occurs to me, as I wander here, afar from the mad world, over these sunny and undulating Cornish Downs, tasting the belated summer I missed amid the sad ruins of tortured Ireland, it occurs to me that the day will come, and is indeed now here, when the men of to-day will be judged by their attitude towards the Great War.

When I look into myself, I seem to see that I already apply that test instinctively. I think, for instance, of my attitude towards that poet — surely I have not forgotten his name? — to whose work I had been drawn before he won a definite public recognition. I had even bought his poems — which one hardly does for the sake of the beautiful eyes of any obscure poet — rather arid poems, indeed, a little dark, not always musical, yet, it seemed, the outcome of a personality with a genuine vision and subtle emotions, some of which made an intimate appeal. But he published a book in which were some feeble little patriotic verses about the War. The great poet knows how to show love of his country greatly, even sometimes by chastising it. But here was merely the overflow of the feminine hysterical mob passion, however altered in external guise. There was nothing more to be said. One may smile tenderly when a frightened woman screams and runs, but one scarcely feels called upon to acclaim a gesture of greatness. One is merely in the presence of weakness.

Yet perhaps we should resolutely determine to see more in it than that. The Great War has not merely been the test of

a man's nobility of character; it has been the test of his devotion to the cause of humanity, to the supreme good of the world. Little enough, as we know, the herd cares for that. But if we want to find out what our would-be spiritual and intellectual leaders are worth, let us search diligently to find out their records during the War. Have they in speech or action encouraged that War? Have they spoken evil of those who fought on the other side? Have they pharisaically asserted their own superior self-righteousness? Have they like imbeciles accepted the empty catchwords of their politicians? If not, it is well, and we may hold up our heads. But else they are judged — and we who made them leaders are judged — for by their own mouths they are declared foul emanations of the passions of the crowd, Poison Gas made Flesh. It is meet they are branded on the brows with the Mark of the Beast to which they have sold what they call their souls. So all their fellows may know whom they had to thank for the blessings of the Great War. And if they show their gratitude by hardening the muscles of their arms, and gathering all the serpents they can find to make a scourge to lash the backs of these leaders until not one of them is left, perhaps, after all, there might not be less joy on earth.

That impulse may well move within us all in so far as we possess any fibre of that spirit which raised Man from the slime and some day, possibly, may raise him further yet. But 'in so far' may not be very far. We know also that Man is a gregarious animal, like the Pig — that fellow gregarian we so often hypocritically malign — and we know all about the Gadarene swine, and we know how prudent it is to cast the pearls of our wisdom elsewhere than before them. So we must be prepared to accept good-humouredly the reply of the average person to any invitation to lift Man that further inch higher, a reply that is sure to be a cheerful 'I don't think.'

The world is essentially Absurd. We usually fail to see it for the good reason that we fail to see the world at all. We rarely have that Intuition of the Absurd, that power of seeing the world whole and apart from our personal ends which Bergson has in his mellifluous way explained Intuition to be. But it is a part of its Absurdity that there should be a little thread of Reason running through the world, and in so far as we discern that thread, and hold by it, we have attained the Intuition of the Absurd, we have seen the world with the eyes of God, we have lifted ourselves above the Herd in the Slime.

DECEMBER 15: The long straight waves advance swiftly across the little bay on this open Atlantic coast, with what seems a joyous eagerness beneath the cloudless blue sky; their crests slowly rise and curve forward to fall in foam from which a fine white smoke ascends, and at their flanks on each side of the bay they crash, to break variously and delightfully over the great rocky boulders of slate scattered fantastically along the shore, leaving large basins here and there in the rocks, often deep and full of clear water, bright mirrors shining in the sun, touched now and again by the exhilarating northwest wind into ever varying ripples, endlessly flowing and shining lines of light, revealing all the beauty and significance of light, so that I never grow tired of watching their delicate and graceful play.

Alone but for a few meditative gulls, I sit among the rocks and dream of the miracle of this restless, antiseptic sea that for millions of years has been slowly and tirelessly absorbing all the rejected filth that the Earth and now Man can pour into it, and still to-day, as at the first, sends forth its fresh procession of waves in Purity and Joy, for the sacred lustration of an Evil World.

There is, it is true, a difference. The sea has become a little saltier, though not more antiseptic than the earth's increasing foulness demands. For we are making ever greater demands on the sea, forever making harder the 'priestly task of pure ablution.' Even in this little remote bay, with scarce half a dozen simple little houses near, there is visible, just above high-water mark, obscene human rubbish of all kinds, which it will take long years for the wind and the sea to sweep away and purify and transmute.

Yet there are people among us, and not a few, who view with complacency the vast increase of the world's population everywhere taking place, people who would even urge the human procreative impulse to still wilder excesses. Until every square yard of the earth is intensively cultivated by Man, until the virulent air is soaked with the noxious fumes of human machinery, until the sea is poisonous with human effluvia, until all earth's shores are piled high with the sordid refuse of human maleficence, it seems to these people that the world will never feel happy.

This is not an imaginary possibility of evil, lying in some remote and problematic future. We are faced by it, here and now, in every so-called civilised country of the world. It is not less threatening in the Australian Bush than in Europe or America, for those old lands are in any case damned and the new lands might yet be saved. In the early days of the world, even until a few centuries ago, there was no unnatural and inhuman quarrel between Man and Nature, for Man was still even in his external life — as at heart he must ever be — in harmony with Nature. But now, through superfluity of cleverness and wickedness — however admirable each of these qualities may be in moderation — Man has involuntarily entered into a contest with Nature, fatal alike to him and to her, yet a contest from which it is hard to draw back. Its fatality for Nature we see on every hand. As regards one

small corner of the world, Dr. James Ritchie, who speaks with authority, has lately drawn a terrible picture in his substantial work on *The Influence of Man on Animal Life in Scotland*. Man arrived late in Scotland — he had already reached the Neolithic stage — and he found a rich fauna there on his arrival. He proceeded to destroy utterly the nobler fauna of free and beautiful creatures — many of them working for his good had he but known — and replaced it by a degraded fauna, virtually of his own creation, and yet only existing to prey upon him. He found the reindeer and the elk and the wolf and the brown bear and the lynx and the beaver and the otter and the buzzard and the bittern and the water-ousel and the golden eagle and the sea eagle and the osprey and the great auk. And he killed them all. And in their stead he placed by countless millions the rabbit and the sparrow and the earthworm and the caterpillar and the rat and the cockroach and the bug, scarcely or at all found there before he brought them, and they have flourished and preyed. For, as Ritchie has shown, Man's influence upon Nature, even when it seems but tiny and temporary, is yet in its total effect greater than imagination can grasp.

Scotland is but a small part of the world, and (so at least every Scottish man who has turned his back on it tells us) among the more favoured parts. Other regions have suffered more, and the best regions most, though they have produced no Ritchie to tell the tale. Everywhere we see Man to-day surrounded by a cloud of animal and vegetable parasitic vermin, from rodents to bacteria, multiplying as he multiplies and even more rapidly, so that he can never overcome it, preying upon him and slaying him, rendering him, indeed, in the process so poisonous that when a boatful of apparently healthy civilised Europeans is landed on a remote island inhabited by simple natural men it has sometimes left death-spreading infection behind. The old Greek myth of Chronos

and Zeus has at length been translated into prosaic fact. Man has slain Nature, the Mother that gave birth to him and devastated all the wonder and beauty of the world that was given to his charge. Now in his turn he is about to be slain by the swarm of living things he has himself in effect created.

Yet there is still a way of escape open to Man. If, even yet, he should gain conscious and deliberate control of his own fatal power of reproduction, if he could learn to bring his own kind back again into better adjusted perspective with Nature, by decreasing his reproductive exuberance to increase the possibilities of free and exalted living, he would be making what seems to many foolish people the Great Renunciation of life which would yet be in reality the Great Triumph of life.

There are thinkers who have occupied themselves with the problem of the exact mode of Man's ending. Some imagine it will be by an epidemic of collective insanity, of which germs may already be detected. Others, a little more hopeful, believe that Man will see things as they are at last, and act accordingly, though only when it is too late to save any fragment of the earth worth saving.

Yet to-day is not too late if Man but knew, not too late to save the world, or at least to win what is left of it for spacious and pleasant living to a finer human race that had become the reasonable artists of its own size and shape. To-day is still offered a Choice — 'brief and yet endless.'

DECEMBER 23: The wind has been blowing a stiff gale from the west all night and sudden squalls have swept in now and again. This morning the wind has dropped and the sky for a while is blue. But the sea is still alive; her pulse beats mightily from the sting of the wind's kisses. Her body is still restless and writhing, her limbs far flung. Not to-day, as so often, is she sending in the slow

solemn ranks of rollers to curve smoothly and break delicately as they come to land. To-day the waves rush in swiftly in great irregular masses, falling to pieces in their haste, to clash and melt in one another, or rise as they unite in a spasm of inverted cascades. Nearer in, the turbulent swift irregular waves crash wildly against the rocks in infinite variety of living motion, or roll back in some strangely irregular step of the dance-measure to leap into each other's arms, and then to bound on with renewed energy; and here mountains of foam arise as some huge boulder is struck; and here delicate whiffs ascend a few feet only, resting in the air long enough for the eye to catch the outline of their beauty; and here the foam mounts and spreads like a huge hand closing tenderly all over some slope of rock, inserting its fingers lovingly into every cranny. And now, as the tide sweeps nearer, the exuberant foam is everywhere leaping in great joyous white flames on to the cliffs, and again I see it surging up even beyond the dark high hill that shuts off the next inlet of the sea, even where the hill becomes a green slope, leaping in spires, amid vaster masses of foam, a cloudy exhilarating mist which floats softly towards me, while a low deep rumbling bass seems to furnish the pivot on which the wild fugal dance turns in harmonious rhythm.

So it is to-day. So it was in days long æons before any of the things that we in our narrow sense call living moved on the earth. The waves clasped one another then with just as joyous love. There was life and there was play and there was art and there was music and dance. The same words would fit the waves then that we apply to our most admired beings of human flesh. But there was none to mark. So by some stress of unconscious desire Nature created her little mechanical living toys that could see and feel. It seemed not enough, so she created Man, who could not only see and feel but know, realising the world from outside, as she realises it, incorporat-

ing her Godhead of the Seventh Day. Therewith her desire was fulfilled and there was nothing more to do. Nature has had her whim. There was not so much in it after all. And she had to pay for it. Man proved a dangerous plaything. Only one problem remains: How to dispose of him?

She will solve the problem some day. On that day the sea will still come rolling in with the same joyous life and the same bright beauty. But once a creature stood here who saw and felt and knew that beauty. It will have been enough.

DECEMBER 24: As I lay with closed eyes half asleep there appeared out of blankness on the curtain of my eyelid the vision of a beautiful anonymous feminine face, and in a few moments faded as involuntarily as it appeared. The like phenomenon is apt to happen to most people. Therefore the miracle of such creation out of seeming nothingness escapes attention. It scarcely seems worth notice save to those among us who now and then discuss hypnogogic hallucinations for the languid interest of a few psychological readers. It is only to the rare child of genius, whose vision is not dulled by familiarity, that the inexplicable marvel is apparent. Of such was Leonardo da Vinci, who, after briefly summing up the familiar wonders of our dream life, can exclaim with awe: 'Oh! meraviglia della umana spezie!'

To-day I look through a pretentious just-published book which contains a long series of photographs representing the course of the materialisation of a face not so unlike the face I saw last night. The author attaches much importance to this phenomenon, and seeks to build up a theory of psychic dynamism which shall explain the whole mystery of life. One need not grudge him his theory, however free one may oneself be from any anxiety to explain the whole of that mystery. Yet, granting the authenticity of these photographs — and

I do not feel it necessary to dispute this — it scarcely seems to me that such 'materialisation' furnishes any new and revolutionary basis for a theory of the universe, whatever bearing it may have on unrecognised aptitudes of the human mind. This woman, this medium, with her special organisation and special faith, has, we assume, succeeded in making the image of a beautiful human face visible to other eyes than her own. It slowly forms, and, in a little while, slowly disintegrates and fades. The like happened in my vision. The difference is that mine appeared spontaneously, and against the inner curtain of my eyelid, so it was only visible to me. The medium's appeared against the background of her blouse, was visible to other people and affected the photographer's sensitised plate. The one vision would be as miraculous as the other if they were both equally rare, and the one vision remains as significant as the other vision so far as any theory of the universe is concerned. The materialised vision might well be merely a condensation and a moulding of the ordinary human 'aura' which, it has been found, may be normally influenced by the will.

For the miracle of Man is always developing, though each new stage is but a further phase of the original miracle, and so brings no change into the universe. Saints of old walked with haloes round their heads, and painters painted them, many centuries before the human aura was detected by men of science. It is not many years since Dr. Kilner first found that by looking through a fragment of chemically prepared glass — though with care the unaided eye suffices — at a naked human form, the body is seen framed in an aura which varies at different times and in different persons. A few months ago, in Dr. Kilner's laboratory at Bury St. Edmunds, I was privileged to see — though like many other things this can be seen, and then sometimes but elusively, only after a little training of the eye — the seemingly vaporous

aura surrounding the head and body of a naked young woman who stood passively before a screen in a rather subdued light. Shelley sang of the sage 'with inner glory crowned.' He might have been pleased to know that we are all thus crowned with glory, and women to greater extent than men.

Yet the simplest and commonest things of the world are the greatest of miracles. I know no greater miracle than when from between the thighs of a woman one sees a complete new human being slowly emerge head first into the world. All our explanations, all our theories of descent, of heredity, our jargon, harsh or beautiful, of zygotes and chromosomes, do not make it explicable; they merely smother it in words concealing rather than revealing. We are no further from miracle than when we fabled that Eve arose from the side of sleeping Adam into the Garden of Eden.¹

DECEMBER 29: The clouded sky hangs low, grey and tender, softly falling, now and again, in a fine almost imperceptible rain, for a mild and languid wind is coming from the west. As I stand on the northern headland of this bay I see how the smooth slaty sea swells into slow long billows, larger than I have yet seen here, that curve slowly over into spray. They swell and flow and rise so calmly, so majestically, so deliberately, that they seem to dream, as I seem to dream, that they are still on the far shoreless Atlantic where they can swell and rise and flow at ease. But here, suddenly, they crash against the dim dark rocks and break with an immense surprise, into cascades of pearls and moun-

¹ Thereupon I wrote to Dr. Kilner to inquire whether this fairly obvious identification of the normal 'human aura' with the abnormal 'ectoplasm,' as it has been called, of the medium, had been suggested by others. The reply came from his daughter that he had died not very long after my visit. As often happens with those who work alone, and ahead of their fellows, his disappearance had not been noticed. But he lived just long enough to complete the second enlarged edition of his book on the human aura.

tains of foaming snow, pausing in the air, it seems, in a momentary wonder, ere they fall and fade and float away in vapour. So it is along the coast as far as eye can see, and I watch, enthralled, the endless slight variety in the eternal harmony.

At the farm next door to where I dwell, in this thinly populated land, there lives an old man of ancient name, of a family privileged during long centuries to absorb the beauty and inspiration of this rare spot and become subdued by what they work in, 'like the dyer's hand.' Last night the farmer's wife died, never having gained strength after an operation performed a few days ago. In the evening her husband had arrived home drunk from the nearest town five miles away; all day long a son-in-law and a daughter-in-law had been anxiously pestering the servant girl for the keys, entrusted to her care by the dying woman, of the box where she kept her money.

There are still, people tell me, regions of the earth abandoned to Nature and waiting to be reclaimed — I believe that is the word — by Man; there is still reason to believe, they solemnly warn us, that Man is not multiplying at the rate at which it is theoretically possible for him to multiply.

JANUARY 3, 1921: Before Christmas, whenever I went up the road past the farmhouse on the other side of the valley, there were seven fat geese, settled side by side on the top of the broad wall of herring-boned slates along the roadside, who without stirring would cheerfully greet my approach with a chorus of loud cackling, and as I complacently passed in front of this enthusiastic ovation I would sometimes think how much pleasanter it may sometimes be to face the cackling of geese than of men. To-day when I passed I missed them.

If only Pontius Pilate knew! How surprised that indolent sceptical Roman official might be could he know that the malefactor of whom he washed his hands and let go to the gallows would some day through that indifferent act become one with the Sun God, the Apollo-Dionysus of a new age, on whose Natal Altar millions of bloody sacrifices would all over the earth be offered up at the new birth of the Solar year by people who knew as little about it all as he knew, and cared no more! If he only knew! — And if we ourselves only knew the vast echoes of the things we do to-day!

JANUARY 9: I recall, from some fifteen or more years ago, the sensation that was aroused by the discovery, a few miles from Padstow, of an ancient Celtic burying-ground, extending in time, it may be, until nearly as late as the coming of the Romans. Now I have walked to Harlyn Bay to visit the site of these finds and the fascinating little museum near by which holds some of the graves and their bones, as well as the delicate implements of slate that were found in them.

In those days, it would seem — some people, no doubt, will not be surprised — the Cornish may have been cannibals, for a collection of human bones has been found a mile or two away, chopped up into small pieces, and the long bones split downwards to extract the marrow, since they reverently buried what they could not eat. They also had a way of placing their probably already dying friends alive in the grave, and then smashing their heads with a big stone, still to be found in the grave, with the hands of the corpse raised to protect the face. These graves were found beneath walls which they were apparently meant to sanctify and protect, and sometimes anxiety was felt lest the departed should escape and return to earth, for some of the urns containing inciner-

ated ashes were turned upside down, so that for the spirit imprisoned within there should be no resurrection.

One is tempted at first to see something rather inhuman, almost cruel, in the customs of those ancestors of the Cornish people. Yet look at us, the English of to-day! We claim to be advanced, humane, even to be the banner-bearers of Righteousness; our Societies for the Protection of Animals are rolling in wealth — and look at us in Ireland, torturing and mutilating and slaying at random men, women, and children, and not staying for any reverent burial of the corpses. Let us beware of questioning the humanity and civilisation and justice of these old Cornish.

The Cornish, after all, were thoughtful of the dead. They considerably buried with them — as men had done for thousands of years before them — the things they had needed during life and perchance might still need after death, in heaven or elsewhere. That was a custom that still sometimes persisted also in England as late as mediæval times. The Cornish, like the people in many other parts of the world, gradually spiritualised this notion; instead of placing really useful pots and other articles in the grave, they substituted poor specimens made for the purpose — as it were the ghosts of useful things instead of the things themselves — or else broken fragments, and at last threw into the grave mere shards and pebbles.

As I meditated on that evolution, an idea came to me that may well have come also to others. The handful of earth that in the Christian rite is thrown into the grave after the coffin is lowered, may it not be the survival, in a but slightly transformed shape, of the ancient custom of providing the dead with the utensils needed for the next world? On the one hand there is little difference between a handful of potsherds and a handful of gravel. On the other hand, it is not easy to see how the Christian rite could have arisen out of nothing. There is

no obviousness about it, and the forced reason assigned for it in our Rite seems to be less a reason than a rationalisation of an existing practice. It all becomes intelligible if we suppose that we have here a custom taken over by Christian priests from Pagans who would not dare to abandon it, and consecrated by a new and ingenious significance. Just in the same way it is, I suppose, that the rough stone pillars we see so often in Cornish fields, phallic appeals to the generative sources of Nature, we may well believe, were here and there sanctified by devout early Christians who carved a cross on them and left them for us to cherish. It is so, indeed, in all the uses of our lives, and at every point of good or evil we are the slightly transformed spirits of our ancestors.

JANUARY 14: Two months by the sea, where the waves rolled in from eternity, alive like the whole Universe with a perpetual slight novelty in imperturbable monotony, where the ancient fantastic rocks raced sea and wind and rain and frost and gently yielded a fragment here and there to their urgency, at the rate, it seemed, of not so many tons by the century, where the birds circled in flocks over the verge of this last promontory into the ocean with just the same wondering hesitant movement as when they first began to learn the art of migration in the early world, where the rare human creatures planted in the land centuries ago now look like their own rare and stolid ancient lichen-covered trees and arouse the same kind of feeling in the spectator — and then to be dropped suddenly in the London streets.

How thrilling it all is! I feel that I am the spectator at a super-cinema of the world. It is all so brilliant, so swift, so thin and so evanescent. The background of the picture may be sordid indeed, but one has no time to think of it in this unending stream of life and movement, these insistent shop-

windows, these glaring lights, all these weary and fascinating women and girls, so variously bright in costume, with the careless abandonment of people who feel they are hidden in a crowd, the baskets of startlingly gay flowers for sale in the murky atmosphere, the bursts of crude music, almost intoxicating to ears so long unfamiliar — I seem to have emerged from Eternity to enter the world of Time, for the scene is for ever changing, for ever hurrying on feverishly, urged by the calm, relentless, invisible Operator, for ever falling over the edge into a bottomless Abyss of Forgetfulness. This is civilisation.

I gaze at the spectacle and I dream of the world of Eternity I have left behind.

JANUARY 20: Another Book about Goethe!

Among the rare great human persons that have risen on the surface of the earth to remain for ever visible to our eyes, Goethe is the supreme unscaled Mount Everest. Every attempt to conquer that height and survey it all round and sum it up ends in failure, if not disaster, for the explorers. There are other great human manifestations on the earth which we brood over and seek to comprehend. There is Rousseau, for instance, like a vast cloud-mountain, made of iridescent vapour, which when men try to wrestle with it their hands merely close on themselves, and the mountain remains, part of the atmosphere they are breathing all the time. There are Shakespeare, Leonardo, wonderful summits, and yet critics have found accessible spots for their own joy and ours. But Goethe not only eludes the explorer, he seems to lure him to destruction. The fascination of this inscrutable height is indeed exerted on the most various and the unlikeliest people, even on this Scottish professor of palæographic history who devoted so much of his life to this latest Goethe book.

And they have the most discrepant attitude toward the task, from awe to flippancy. They ascend by the most various paths and they have the most unlike experiences. But most of them return leaving a limb in some man-trap the mountain holds. They have not conquered the mountain, they have merely revealed their own limitation.

A reviewer who was, I believe, Henley, wrote of my first book that 'that colossal sentimentalist,' as he was pleased to term Goethe, stalked through the whole of it, though I had scarcely mentioned his name. — May my guardian angel continue to preserve me from writing about Goethe!

FEBRUARY 8: A great engineering authority, Lord Headley, in his presidential address to the Society of Engineers yesterday, stated that immense progress is still possible in the practice of warfare, especially if we are ever able to harness the electrons. He foresaw a time when a general officer, sitting comfortably at his desk, might touch a button which would release destructive agencies capable of sweeping hundreds of square miles and annihilating the armies of the enemy, together with all other living things, while his own armies were similarly annihilated by the general officer in command on the other side similarly touching a button. What device should be adopted to enable the expectant nations to know which side had been victorious, Lord Headley fails to indicate. It would be useless to appoint impartial umpires at Headquarters on both sides to register the time when the buttons were pressed, so that the world might know which general got in his blow first, for the umpires would both disappear in the general destruction. It is a difficult problem.

But, however that may be decided, it should be Mankind's unceasing prayer that the day may come swiftly, for it is

essential that war should be brought to an end. Men have dreamed of various ways in which the prayer might be answered. Some have believed that the end might be gained by the growth of the instinct of Sympathy. Some have believed in the growing influence of Reason. But we see that human emotion is remarkably one-sided in its action, and as to Reason, it plays a very subordinated part in the mental processes even of the Superior Persons whom our democracies set up to rule the world. Until the time when the conquest of the birthrate has become so firmly established that human 'cannon fodder' is too dear to use, the method forseen by Lord Headley seems alone to hold out hope for Mankind. One might have preferred other less radical methods of attaining the same end. But evidently it was not to be.

MARCH 12: Last week, when I was feeling, as ever since I left Cornwall I have felt, singularly firm against assault, Death, in his casual tentative indifferent way, just gave me a torturing prick with his scythe as he passed by, leaving me alive but bleeding. Ever since I lie on my back invalid, for the first time in my active life, and whether he is likely to come again soon there is none to tell me.

Yet, I find, I remain serene, even continuously cheerful. For some years past I have accommodated my arrangements to Death and guided my activities accordingly, even though I may not yet have completed everything I had planned as the minimum — for I am content the maximum should go — of my Day's Work — my Day's Play — in the world. Without rest yet without haste — it is the law of my nature which I have no intention of changing now. My faith has carried me through so far and will accompany me to the end. Death is the final Master and Lord. But Death must await my good

pleasure. I command Death because I have no fear of Death, but only love.

MARCH 17: From time to time, at long intervals, she would drift into my room, like a large white bird hovering tremulously over the edge of a cliff, a shy and sinuous figure, so slender and so tall that she seemed frail, yet lithe, one divined, of firm and solid texture. I speak of her as a woman, yet she was in a sense beyond the distinction of sex, at once a married mother and an adolescent virginal youth, and these two together, not by any inharmonious clash, but lifted into the higher unity of a being who belongs to another race.

Yet let it not seem that at that time I made any observations so definite as these. This was still an altogether unknown instrument that was from time to time placed within my reach, as yet a meaningless instrument on which I could scarcely strike a random casual note. I hardly even sought to. I was, as ever, incurious, always content to wait for the revelation the Gods may in their grace bring me, just as I have waited for years, consciously or unconsciously, before the paintings or the poems of some great master, who was meaningless to me, until by little glimpses of vision, by sudden flashes of intuition before my purged eye, the Flame of Beauty at last was bared. For I would say with Plotinus that it is the business of the Gods to come to me and not for me to go to them. Thus it was then; and when I look back to those days I seem only able to recall in detail the intellectual brows, a little ascetic, they seemed, above that long waving form, and an occasional ripple of laughter, a shallow ripple, like the little sudden shudder that passes over the surface of a solemn pool of water among the rocks at low tide, touched by a quick breath of wind from the sea,

So it was that slowly only and by imperceptible degrees I learnt to see and to evoke by touch the mystery of this new Revelation that the Gods had brought to my humble door. It was a memorable step in the unfoldment when, one unexpected day, the tall figure rose and approached and I felt cool kisses, like the rich petals of some tea rose, falling softly on my face, amid murmured words, and the rustle of long cool limbs for a moment gliding gently around my own. Therewith the slow process of my awakening was touched into sudden acceleration, the vague images that had been aroused in my mind began to crystallise; there was a new keenness of vision in my eyes and a new sensitiveness of touch in my hands. For the first time I knew clearly that this was a Person, of whatever nature and from whatever far world visitant, a Person, not only a gracious wreath of soft shy mist, for concealed beneath there was a massive even rugged frame and a latent power of strong impulse that was new to itself as to me. So I grew alert and reverent, ready to worship whatever Divine Image I might be able to discern through earthly envelopes.

It cannot have been long after that day, I began to perceive something even in the manner of the garments of this Person different from the women I had known in the world. Her clothing was not something closely and firmly enswathing a loose body, with difficulty found and disentangled, and when found mostly featureless and insignificant. There was a certain rarity and distinction, an individual impress, in the few garments that she wore; yet personal as they were, one realised that they were not part of her, they seemed to fall away at a touch, she seemed able to glide out of them with no effort. The Person to whom these garments belonged, however shy and shrinking in a cold and alien world, might thus be native to a world where clothing was a grace of living, rather than an essential art of living, and the body itself too full of mean-

ing, and itself too full of mystery, to need garments or to bear being garmented. I dimly divined this as I caught careless entrancing glimpses of this body.

I well remember the day on which it was first altogether revealed to me. Day indeed it scarcely was any longer. Twilight had come, the light without shadows when all familiar things grow mysteriously unfamiliar, the light in which alone we can imagine that immortal forms of sculpture might become soft and flexible and warm. I lay back on my couch, the curtains of the windows were still parted and a bright light from afar made a clear pattern on the wall. We talked of I know not what grave things in art or in life, and as we talked she rose from the depths of her chair and it seemed by scarce an effort of disentanglement floated into my sight without a single garment left to veil the soft radiance of her form. The room was full of diffused light, yet so softened and dimmed that that illusion of night was present which ever imparts strength and assurance to women and maybe to angels. Yet this illusion of night was no more than the atmosphere made visible, in which this lofty Person shone not only in clear outline, but with all due variations of bright tone and gloom of shaded recesses. All the natural saliences of form were subdued. The shallow inverted bowls of the breasts were of a virginal shape astonishing to see, the firm belly no less, and only the little trace of a droop in the tender globes behind somehow indirectly suggested the touch of maternal fatigue. There was in this length in body and legs yet a measured and rightful proportion, so that one was reminded of those supreme Egyptian artists who — perhaps inspired by the neighbouring Dinka folk who are of all human people the most extravagantly and beautiful excessive in limb — drew upon their temple walls such divinely tall and slender gods and men. Yet here was no schematically fantastic caricature. There was the tender almost pathetic breath

of life emanating from her, emanating almost, one imagined, in fragrance, yet but imagined, for it was only by intimate contact that one might know or divine the scent and the taste of the mysterious salts and essences that distilled from the guarded places of her form and helped to suggest the firm underlying structure beneath a shape that at first glance seemed so ethereal, befitting large appetites and a great thirst for water and for wine, those two things which of all things that enter the human body have a significance, in purity and in hilarity, which is more than human and enable the human to drink of sources which are divine because alone they remain immortally incorrupt. So the vision before me was signed with the mark of an origin that seemed yet more hieratically remote than any racial sources to which her human kin bore witness.

In the human people we know, the mingling of race that must ever be present seems often to bring a clash and conflict of tendency in spirit, and almost it seems in body, a conscious struggle of higher and lower, an ever-present awareness of a bit in the mouth, and invisible ancestors who draw the reins to this side and to that even at the same moment. It never seemed so to me in this Person. Even as in her form the virginal and the maternal were marvellously united into a harmony of adolescent youth, so it was in her spirit. The strange discrepancies of her soul lay peacefully side by side, the lion by the lamb. The thin austere lines upon her intellectual brows were the outward sign of a subtle brain that played among the glistening points of glacier heights, pursuing there delicate fancies of imagination that often seemed almost to elude perception, and wrought our human speech into harmonies as of stalactites of icicles grouped amid the rocks of the cliffs when a frost follows rain. Yet, without any violency of transition, she would linger maliciously over the stories of human weakness and brood deliciously over licentious images,

until lascivious pearls of sweat gathered together in the sheltered recesses of the prostrate form lying passive, without movement, for the energy of passion is human and belongs not at all to those beings who seem to us to bear about their forms and their spirits something of the semblance of Eternity. Human creatures, when they are most human, distinguish between good and evil, they strive after the good, they seek to avoid the evil, it is even their desire to trample down their worse self and on that ruin to raise a better. In the perpetual effort of such moral struggle, in the desire, even though it prove vain, to give of itself to other ends, their human nobility lies. But to Heaven all things are fair. Nature and the Gods are no more evil than they are good; moral nobility is not for them. 'I am what I am': it is their perpetual affirmation, not, it need be, arrogantly, nor yet, it need be, meekly, yet always without struggle.

'I am': that always seems to the human mind the affirmation of the Most High, yet it is an affirmation out of a sphere in which there is neither high nor low in our human sense, just as we see there neither good nor bad. When that is realised, we have gained the deepest insight into the Divine that the years can bring us, we no longer rate too highly or too lowly what man has blindly revered as God or condemned as Nature. Like Arethusa or some immortal Nymph of the ice and the water, this mysterious Person appeared to me, sometimes in the silence, as it were, of glacial mountain heights, and sometimes on the lowlands or robustly gushing or gently rippling water. Yet there was no spiritual sense in which either the one or the other was truly high or truly low. There came before me the symbolically significant vision, the physical or the spiritual vision, in which this profound reality was made manifest and this lofty Person was revealed under an aspect which seemed the incarnation of that living and profuse Nature which is neither high nor low. The tall form

languidly arose and stood erect, taut and massive it seemed now with the length of those straight adolescent legs still more ravishing in their unyielding pride, and the form before me seemed to become some adorable Olympian vase, and a large stream gushed afar in the glistening liquid arch, endlessly, it seemed to my wondering eyes, as I contemplated with enthralled gaze this prototypal statue of the Fountain of Life, carved by the hands of some daring and divine architect, out of marble like flesh, that marble which has in its texture the mingled warm and matt tones of human flesh, mortal and immortal at once, motionless and passive, yet of wondrous energy, the image of creative arrogance; while on the firm austere lines of the face one read, not pride, but a shy and diffident smile, the fear lest to the merely human spectator that which is transcendent should be mistaken for what is gross.

Yet there is no language for mortals to whom are vouchsafed brief moments of intuition into the reality of a world which for all the daily purposes of life is merely a dull show fittingly expressed in dull words, nor are there any images to express meaningly to men what comes into the mind when slowly one by one the scales have fallen from our eyes and we nakedly glimpse, once or twice or thrice on our course through the world and most of us never at all, one of those rare divine beings who pass veiled and disguised through life, as in mediæval days the old forsaken gods of Greece and Rome were said still to linger here and there in the world, with a cowl drawn over their flaming eyes, or a rough kirtle deforming the symmetry of their perfect limbs.

Before the inner eye of those who are drowning, they say, there pass in procession the significant visions of all their lives. As I lie here, floating back to life, there pass before my inner eye from among the pictures of those rare and lovely persons that here and there it has been given me as my supreme grace

in the world to discern and to know, not those that are from long ago mine, closest and most tender, but this mysterious revealing Person, surrounded with a halo of silence and parted by half the world's space.

MARCH 19: When, as so often nowadays, I come upon the lofty contemptuous horror of war professed by Superior People — it is clearly manifested by the reviewers of Wilfred Owen's *Poems* in reproval or depreciation of that young poet's charges against our society — I fear I am overcome by nausea. For where were these Superior People in 1914? They write in the very organs of public opinion which a few years ago were the resonant mouthpieces of War and Patriotism, the glorification of ourselves and the vilification of our enemies, and the tone of the voice, the turns of the phrasing, the complacency of superiority, are all the same. War to-day is neither better nor worse than it has ever been, merely a little more intensive because of our increased skill and a little more extensive because of the increased swarming of our much multiplied race. Long before this last war there were those who knew and struggled with the problems of this evil thing and used their little strength to try so to mould the world betimes that it might be eliminated. No man marked. And now this empty chaff of Superior People, that was blown along so gaily and irresponsibly when the wind of war raged, is blown along just as gaily and irresponsibly now when the wind is changed, with never a glimmering sense of its own imbecility.

No doubt the population of the world must consist, as Carlyle said, of 'mostly fools.' But one cannot help feeling that it might be better for it, and even for them, if the Superior People among them, at all events, were Honest Fools. 'We shout for peace to-day,' they might then tell us, 'we are all

Pacifists just now. But wait a while. The day will come. Once more we shall shout for War as in 1914. Once more we shall joyfully send our Heroes to glory and erect hideous memorials to them afterwards. Once more we shall raise the banner of the War-to-end-War. Once more we shall cast the Poison-Gas of our hatred over the world.'

That would be folly, but it would be honest folly. It would be the true prophecy of men who knew themselves. But men who know themselves are no longer fools; they stand on the threshold of the Door of Wisdom. There are few who stand there, and so we must be content with the world as we find it, striving indeed to make a new world by breeding out the foolish stocks, and, when we are not strong enough for that, standing aside to smile while they carry on their majority world, gleaning such ears of joy as may be left to us from the wonder of the spectacle, knowing that if we have missed our vision Nature's vision is still left to us.

MARCH 27: Every day I feel more keenly the advantage of being touched, however faintly, by a feather of Death's wing.

One's mind grows so much more active and alert; one becomes so supremely indifferent to the things that are not, for oneself, eternal. We are told that age is garrulous, for ever repeating the same things, meandering along a path that might be endless for all the care the aged seemed to feel of the swiftly approaching End. So we are told. Though I should myself have thought that there are many old men like Bishop Stubbs of whom they say that, when a friend took him into a fine library, he remarked: 'What is the use of a library to me, a man who hasn't time to take a Seidlitz powder?' But I suppose we are to admit that they tell us truly. And, if so, perhaps the reason is that the old do not feel aware of that End.

It is when we are young that we possess that awareness most keenly. I have never written any welcoming Ode to Death since I was fourteen. But the old have followed the same path so long; they have never seen the End; it begins to seem to them immeasurably far off; they have so much time to waste. So how wholesome a reminder it is that the axe should be placed in one's hands for a moment, that one should be permitted to feel how sharp is its edge. There is no time then left for anything that is common or mean, for

‘at my back I always hear
Time’s wingèd chariot hurrying near.’

I quote the poet whose tercentenary falls just now, the poet who was neither Cavalier nor Roundhead, or perhaps both at once, and thus is peculiarly congenial to me since I inherit the blood of those who were fierce on both sides.

So in the brief moments that are left to me I desire no longer to say over again the things I have said before, but rather to say afresh the things still left at my heart unsaid, and to make one final effort to Express the Inexpressed, to squeeze an ever finer essence from the crude juice of the wine-press of life, to help to form that Word in which Man is for ever slowly creating the Universe.

At odd moments it may still be well to be garrulous. It is not meet that we should give any painful shock to legitimate Human Expectations. I fear I may have given too many in my time.

APRIL 6: It is late afternoon. I have come downstairs and sit out by the edge of the little wood. The birds chatter and sing, and there is a haunting familiarity in their trivial music, as though it had once been idly murmured in the background of some intimate and delicious

thing that stirred my heart long ago and lives still in far depths. Where was it?

And so my thought goes instinctively wandering back along the leafy corridors of wooded memories, in this land or in that, through avenues of beeches or of pines, lovely and endeared by love, seeking vainly to find among the branches where was that poignant experience that now comes vaguely and deliciously back in the twitter and song of the Kentish birds. And as I follow in memory the dear Presences that once made more lovely the lovely woods I have known, still vainly seeking, the birds seem to mock my search: 'Where, where, where was it? Where was it — *where?* Where, where was it?'

APRIL 13: In an anonymous but admirable article on Baudelaire I find 'Les Yeux des Pauvres' casually referred to as 'the most cynical of all his cynicisms about love.' The remark strikes me because I am always a little sceptical — I will not say cynical — over the use of that word 'cynical,' even when applied to the animal from which it is ostensibly derived, and I doubt if I have ever myself used it quite seriously. I even suspect that, like the word 'asinine,' it is a sad revelation of human nature.

Let us see. In 'Les Yeux des Pauvres' the poet imagines himself seated with his mistress before a new and splendid café, glasses and decanters in front of them, when he becomes aware of a poor man holding two small children by the hands, and all three gazing into the attractive establishment. The poet is seized by a feeling half of pity, half of shame, and turns for sympathy to the beautiful eyes of his companion. But she merely remarks: 'Can't we have those tiresome people sent away?' 'So incommunicable is thought,' the poet reflects, 'even between people who love each other.'

Now there are women of that sort; we all know them; and they bear stamped clearly all over them the nature of the material of which they are made. No need to 'love' then to find out what that material is; it may be discerned at the outset. There are women, also, of another sort. I have known them and loved them well, women whose native impulses of tenderness and of help have leapt to feeling and perhaps to action before my own reflections of pity or of shame have had time to take shape. The poet has chosen, or is pleased to represent himself as having chosen, a woman of the other sort. His obtuse perception therein has been perfectly mated with her obtuse emotions, and he is so foolish as not to be able to see the resultant harmony. So on this occasion 'cynicism' is merely the failure to recognise that one has been foolish. Need we debase a good old Greek word to express anything so commonplace?

APRIL 18: Now that I sleep lightly at night, since I rest all day, I hear, on this outskirt of the Kentish town, now and again in the hour following midnight and again in the early dawn when all birds else are still silent, the crowing of cocks.

To me there is something pleasant and reassuring in this sound. I share not at all the feeling of those who hear it with horror. I am even tempted to think they suffer from an evil conscience. For the cock is traditionally associated in the Christian world with the voice of conscience and the violation of it that brings remorse. Peter might well go out and weep bitterly a certain night when the cock crew. For all his life after there could be no natural sound so keen and so poignant as the crowing cock, and I can well understand how at last he sought refuge from it in the largest city in the world and became, according to the legend, Bishop of Rome. But, for my own part, I experience no such feeling.

I suppose that the Domestic Fowl was the first bird enslaved by Man, and perhaps the first Oriental creature artificially introduced into our part of the globe. Yet after millenniums of domestication the Red Jungle Fowl of southeastern Asia — however degenerate he may have become and even, they say, with the final languid note added to his cry — remains almost as proud and independent as our hieratic Egyptian cat. It is even like an exotic in Nature, and though I have never heard it in its Asiatic home it scarcely seems to me it can ever have fitted into the natural chorus. There is a disdainful aristocratic isolation about this bird which chooses earth's most silent moments to assert itself and trample down the phenomenal aspects of Nature in order to proclaim the triumph of some higher order. So it has never been idealised by those who love Nature — no Wordsworth has written a sentimental ode to the cock — but rather by those who have sought the symbol of vigilance, of the moral affirmation of the Universe, of the call to Man to be awake and watchful. Yet there is in that call the note of knowledge and assurance. At the hour when human vitality is at its lowest ebb, and despair nearest to hand, then it is that the watchman of the earth raises his voice and the cock crows: All is well with the world.

APRIL 30: I went a few days ago to see the Phoenix's representation of *The Witch of Edmonton*, written three centuries ago by the ingenious collaboration of Rowley, Dekker, and Ford, and seldom seen since, though familiar to all who read the old plays of our great dramatic period. But for my own part, it is so many years since I had to concern myself with this play that now it comes before me, for the first time on the stage, as a new revelation of delight.

I was curious to know what the old play meant for the accredited critics of our decayed dramatic stage to-day. I find

that, with one or two really brilliant exceptions, it means just nothing. They are indifferent or repelled or disapproving.

The ideas that rule the Phœnix production seem at some points mistaken and not to represent the thought or the emotional tone of the dramatists. Yet it is hard to see how anyone who is himself alive and moderately aware of the interest of life can fail to discover what a revelation this play is of life at one of the most keenly alive of all the ages of our English story. The supreme artists are not concerned to bring directly before us the life of their own times, though they cannot fail to do so indirectly. *Faustus* and *Lear* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* of Ford, the greatest of the dramatists concerned in *The Witch*, tell us little of the Elizabethan age and the scarcely less acutely living Jacobean age which immediately followed and was indeed its corollary. Many a less great play tells us much more. *The Witch* cannot fairly be called a great play by anyone, though three accomplished playwrights united to compose it: Ford with his pure poetry and his subtle psychological insight, his sense of the tragedy of the soul; Dekker, the comic realist, so tender and humane, among the first to comprehend the grievous fate of the witch, whom half a century later even the scholarly physician, Sir Thomas Browne, was willing to help to murder; and Rowley, with his masculine sense for dramatic passions and his rough grasp of material stagecraft — these three have happily combined to build up a play which incarnates the world they lived in, its crudity and its ideality, its humanity and its spirituality, its Devil in person and its simple honest shrewd fool who is able to put the Devil to flight. All this is so richly representative of the age that produced it, and of no other age, that when that age had passed the play was no longer fit for the popular stage.

But one would have thought that an age like ours, which has no English stage of its own worth troubling about, except so far as Shaw may still bring life to it, might have had the in-

telligence to declare, through the mouths of its representative experts in dramatic matters, that here at all events was the real living play of a real living age, the age indeed that we are taught to regard as the greatest in English history.

JUNE 4: I am pleased to see the enthusiasm aroused alike among critics and the public by the 'Cuadro Flamenco' which Diaghileff has had the insight to insert into the Russian Ballet performances of this season. I am also a little amused. Dancing has been going on in Spain ever since Spain became known to the world, and no doubt long before. In all the southwest of the peninsula these little semi-circular groups might be seen shouting and dancing and clapping and stamping and singing to the guitar in accordance with traditional art and ritual. They are dying out now; they have been passing away during all the years that I have known Spain; and at this final moment Spanish dancing, in something like its native shape, comes to our insular critics and our insular public as an astonishing revelation of art and energy and beauty. This cannot but be pleasing, even at so late a moment, to a lover of Spain, though one has to admit that while this group and its performances are redolent of Spain it was a mistake to reclothe it in artificial costumes when the native costumes are so beautiful and so befitting; that it was absurd to dub the dances 'Andalusian' when the most popular item was the *Aragonese jota*, and that one has certainly seen this or that dance done here and there in Spain far more superbly than here, though I do not know where I have seen such variously delightful dancing of the arms as that of Marie Calbaicin.

Yet it is no doubt true that there is for our northern minds something exotic in this dancing, not easily to be seen and accepted. (I do not refer here to the footless man in the troupe,

Mate el sin pies, once a bull-fighter, who can execute a most vigorous dance, but since I first saw him is no longer allowed to dance, and now looks, as one hardly felt that before he looked, a pathetic figure, seated in his corner. How can one but feel some contempt for this British public which so gleefully sent its best young men, its husbands and its sons, to be mutilated, and yet is too squeamish to be shown how bravely and capably a mutilated man can face life?) One realises how exotic it is when one notes that even this enthusiastic public, these appreciative critics, cannot quite reconcile themselves to the Malagueña. Yet the Malagueña, with its peculiar melodic shape, its strange melancholy haunting almost harsh strain, is Spain, and not less Spain because it also seems, like Spain itself, to recall Africa.

Indeed all Spanish folk-dance and folk-song is Spain. It is the symbolism as nothing else is of the heights and depths of the Spanish soul, of the sweetness and the primitiveness of the Spanish people — of the sweetness of life that is nearest to the bone — of the tragedy of that adventurous and aspiring people that for one brief moment was supreme in the world and whose great achievements are still immortal. It was so that Spanish dancing seemed to me in the beginning, when I first learnt rapturously to know it, and so it still seems at the end when I may never see it again.

JUNE 20: They are covered with honour. Men treat them with respect, women fall in love with them, ribbons and medals are pinned on their coats, nations are ready to starve to provide them with lifelong pensions, they are encouraged — as we see this day — to form associations to demand for themselves all the best-paid posts in life and the dismissal of all others, women especially, now in employment.

And who are these heroes? They are the men, to whatever

nation belonging, who were willing to be driven like sheep at the bidding of military imperialists in order to blast the world, who flung aside that personal responsibility which might be the divine prerogative of their species, cheerfully becoming machines to slaughter, loot, rape, and crush into nervous impotence every living thing within their reach, who have by their presence killed the sweetness and fruitfulness of every spot of earth they have swarmed over, and therein destroyed every achievement of human skill that could be destroyed, who have come near to undoing all the effortful attainments of graciousness and civility the ages had slowly wrought, who have made all life, so far as their hands could touch it, on the side they fought for as much as on the side they fought against, something fouler than Dante ever fabled of Hell — these are the creatures, slaves of slaves, mere clay in the hands of phrasemongers, who are the Heroes of Man.

O Man, sublime in dreams, pitiful in real life, august in the creation of ideals, lower than an idiot in the face of the real world, O pitiful Man, leave the world alone to be lived in by those who know how to live; be content to dream.

But there is no one left to apostrophise Men nowadays. It would be too rhetorical, it would not suit the mealy-mouthed good breeding of our time. Like Agag we must go delicately, and meekly be hewn in pieces.

JUNE 26: After spending ten days at Margate — a place that for more than half a century I avoided and despised — admiring its delightfully variegated ancient topography, its invigorating air, its amusing human population, its colour and light of a painteresque almost French quality matched or surpassed by an exquisite Dutch quality of its waters on still and sunny days, I have this morning for the first time gone down on the low-tide sands.

Suddenly it seems to me that Margate has receded into a dim distance and that the people scattered along the sands are as though they were not. I am in another world. I am in the world of Nature which has no name, I am in the world of dreams which has no shore. I tread again on the rippled sand; I gaze once more on the shallow pools with their brilliant everlasting play of living light; I inhale the ancient familiar odour of the olive-green seaweeds. Beautiful ghosts, who yet for me are never dead, stir with still more vivid life within my heart. And all these days I never knew that it was but a step from the Esplanade of Margate into the Ocean of Eternity and the World of Dreams.

JULY 3: We are always putting back the origin of culture, we are always finding earlier and earlier in the history of the world peoples who were our equals and even our superiors in the arts, indeed also the artificialities, of life.

I realised that afresh during the wonderful hours I spent to-day at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, revelling in the show of Egyptian things belonging for the most part to the earliest Dynasties.

The marvellous thing about Egyptian culture is that it had, so far as is yet known, no beginning. Where our knowledge of it begins, it had already far passed the stage of beginning. It was accomplished, exquisite, indeed mature. There hangs here the earliest known piece of dyed cloth, a fringed business-like sort of towel; if I heard it had just been made in Morocco I should not be surprised. It is the earliest known, it is many thousands of years old: yet what a long past of other thousands of years must lie behind so complicated and finished a product! That, no doubt, was among their ordinary manufactures. More wonderful are their rarer products, and I scarcely know whether to admire more the fine æsthetic sense

they reveal or the triumphant artistic executive skill. It is true — and it is inevitable — that in later times men have turned their best æsthetic sense and executive skill to objects and to mediums which for the Egyptians were comparatively or altogether indifferent. But the things they cared to do — and they were quite difficult things — they succeeded in doing supremely well. To some extent that was even true of their finest sculpture, for while it usually misses certain supple intimacies we have since grown accustomed to, it is unsurpassed in other qualities. In their familiar objects of daily life, as even the little cosmetic palettes following the outline of some natural object, nothing could be finer. Where they seem to be supreme, also, as supreme as in their pyramids and sphinxes, is in their jewelry, so delicate in its minute detail, so rich in its enamelled colour, so firmly impeccable in its workmanship, and with such a finely controlled sense of beauty. But on every hand there is something to note. I leave at last reluctantly.

The germs of our European civilisation were in their development modified, infused with new strains from other allied Mediterranean sources, so made more supple, more vitally alert, more vivacious, closer to fleeting human emotions, ever more nervously strung. But, I feel more assured than ever, it was these people of the Nile Valley, six thousand and more years ago, who, in their supreme creative originality and force, first planted the seeds.

JULY 8: I have lately read Miss Romer Wilson's novel, *The Death of Society*, largely led to read it by the declaration of a good critic that it was the best novel of its kind since *Wuthering Heights*. (Yet I knew what blind spots there often are in the eyes of good critics: it was a good critic who once thought that Stendhal wrote *Casanova*, and more recently a

good critic who hazarded the opinion that H. G. Wells wrote *Barbellion*; and these opinions were not of the kind that might conceivably turn out to be true.) Since then Miss Wilson has received the Hawthornden Prize for the best imaginative work of the year by a writer under forty — an award I would say no word against. Since then, also, after an interval of, I suppose, at least forty years, I have re-read *Wuthering Heights*.

It seems to me unkind to Miss Wilson to measure her *Death of Society* against *Wuthering Heights*. Now that I have re-read Emily Brontë's book I see that there is no later book in its class that can profitably be compared to it except *The Story of an African Farm*. There are more inequalities and extravagances and crudities of art in *The African Farm* than in the sober unbroken harmony of *Wuthering Heights*, and this is more than the difference between the hard grey gloom of Yorkshire — though the light and waters of Yorkshire can sparkle — and the fierce brilliance of the Karroo, for 'Ellis Bell' was two or three years older than 'Ralph Iron,' at an age when two or three years make a great difference. On the other hand, there is in *The African Farm* an incomparable splendour of style, a poet's imagination, an audacity of thought, a flaming aspiration of social vision which were beyond the orbit of a Emily Brontë's narrow and dark genius. They were alike in that each of them possessed masculine intellect in a feminine temperament, and that each embodied in her book the concentrated youthful passion of a solitary soul of the rarest intensity.

The Death of Society is no such unique revelation of a whole life. It is the second novel of a writer who may well produce a whole series of similarly good or better novels. It is, moreover, distinctly in the romantic manner, like the *Indiana* of the youthful George Sand, with which, indeed, it has one or two points in common, and such a comparison is no mean compliment. The title of Miss Romer Wilson's novel, which also is its

vague refrain, is in the romantic manner, the manner of Ibsen when he is romantic and least successful, as in *The Lady from the Sea*, especially the manner of George Sand, who, however, always knew how to give that manner an eloquent precision. There is little precision in Romer Wilson, who is thus, in an unfavourable sense, more romantic than George Sand. The least romantic figure in her book — and to my sense the best — is the heroine's old husband who really persuades us that he may be, as he claims, the rugged rough-mannered eminent critic, the friend of Ibsen and the rival of Brandes. The heroine arouses much less interest, even less sympathy, than her gruff husband. One cannot see why the chance Englishman who has tumbled out of the Great War into this remote district of Norway should become so enamoured of this quiet stolid middle-aged woman with a grown-up daughter, when he cannot exchange two words with her, so that she remains a complete stranger to him. But one recognises that ignorance is an essential part of the glamour — to use the conventional and proper word — or romance. It is an incalculable quality. No doubt it will be dissipated as soon as the Englishman has returned to Piccadilly. Romance, too, spreads its wings far, but they are vague. Miss Wilson refers to 'Weissman' and 'Romain Roland' and the 'Divine Comedia.' One feels sure that she cannot have meant to spell them all wrong. Yet one also feels that there is a certain harmonious rightness in her doing so. It is all part of the romantic spirit, which lies in seeking after a beauty the world cannot hold and in failing to see the beauty it really holds.

Wuthering Heights is another matter. Its framework is a crude artifice. We have to accept as the narrator a servant woman and to believe that a servant in her talk will use such academic dictionary words as 'diurnal.' Certainly it, too, might well be called romantic. But this is romance kneaded by hands so strong that it emerges as realism. Zola made a

great parade of his scientific regard for heredity and environment. Emily Brontë may scarcely have been aware of their abstract existence. But beside the realism of her truth to the facts of heredity and environment, Zola is theatrical and empty. Heathcliff is Emily Brontë's supreme human creation. To call him a 'ghoul' and to 'scarcely think it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff' was contemptibly unworthy of Charlotte's insight. It is Emily's greatness that she knew better. Inevitably moulded, before birth and after birth, into a morbid and perverse shape, Heathcliff yet remains of the stuff of human nature, even in its most concentrated essence. He carries the passion of love beyond death to its ultimate extravagance. And by what mystery his creator divined the power of such passion, and how she learnt to express its extravagance without extravagance, without violence yet so firmly, so decisively, so truly, remains Emily Brontë's little secret.

JULY 30: When I wrote to a friend that I was purposing to fly across to Paris, on the way to Blois, because, not yet being fully assured of restored health and strength, I wished to avoid the fatiguing and crowded journey by rail and water with the delaying night in Paris, he replied that I reminded him of a distinguished old French lady he had heard of who vaulted over a gate because, as she explained to her astonished granddaughter, she was unable, on account of age and infirmities, to open it. When my friend hears the issue of this flight, he will derive some malicious amusement from the story, and be confirmed as well in his own conservative routine of travel. I shall not agree with him.

Certainly nothing could be more easy and pleasant and peaceful than the first part of the voyage; even the deafening roar of the engine soon becomes soothing by the very mono-

tony of its rhythm. These large Goliath-Farman planes hold twelve passengers, and with a minimum of the troublesome official preliminaries nowadays inflicted on passengers I leisurely stroll aboard with the dear little French friend who accompanies me; La Douce takes a seat immediately behind the French pilot, and I to starboard, while all the other places are soon filled by Americans, altogether eight men and four women. One of the Americans, an officer in the army in France, had crossed nine times before by this same *Compagnie des Grandes Express Aériens*. The rest were all, I think, like us, novices.

It was a deliciously novel experience to embark for the Continent in a quiet field by merely taking one's place in a chair. And then one rose so almost imperceptibly, one glided so smoothly through the air, without even being conscious of movement, borne by invisibly swift propellers over the delicate remote earth with its little white lines of road, and over the faintly rippled sea that looked almost solid, as though it were a sea of molten metal, that it seemed no mode of travel could be so simple, so swift, so delightful. I thought of Leonardo who, first of modern men, began to devise this method of travel, and wished he were with us — we were on our way to visit his last home at Amboise — and I thought wistfully of another who always took such joy in swift movement and would have loved so much thus to fly over earth and sea.

But after we had crossed the Channel and passed Boulogne a change occurred. To us, ignorant of aviation, it was but slowly — though we were next to the pilot and his mechanic, who kept us informed of our position and height — that this became realisable. We had encountered a fierce wind, and against it little progress was possible. The atmospheric processes were, indeed, of the rarest kind. Next day we read much in the papers of that devastating wind through the cloudless sky. It was described as a *sirocco* from the south,

and that day, the 28th, was the hottest ever recorded in Paris. I had fixed the event of this flight, weeks before, to suit La Douce's convenience, not knowing that it had been fixed from the beginning of the world for a great atmospheric event.

There was no escaping the wind. We flew up to over nine thousand feet; we flew very low: all in vain. But our machine began to be buffeted by the gale; it rolled and bumped. Most of my fellow-passengers were air-sick; the pilot himself, for the first time in all his experience, was sick, though he stuck manfully to the wheel with the mechanician's aid; as the number of utensils for so unusual an emergency was limited, the pure ether of heaven became unpleasantly tainted, and I, too old a sailor to succumb, began at last to grow faint and tired. But whatever the height, I never felt dizzy, I never lost the sense of complete security; the air seemed firmer than the calmest sea; one began to understand birds. As I sat in my chair my eyes would be fascinated by the circle of little pistons just outside the window, for there was something ferocious and yet almost human in the untiring energy and speed with which they worked in and out; they seemed a living incarnation of unshakable Fidelity.

Four hours had gone by — much more than the normal time of the whole journey — and our petrol was exhausted. The pilot had almost landed near Abbéville, but thought better of this, and it was between Amiens and Beauvais, in a duly appointed field a few miles from the little town of Poix, that we gently came to earth, hoping that in an hour or two, by the time petrol was secured, the wind would moderate and we might complete the voyage. But the majority of our washed-out and dishevelled fellow-passengers had not the least desire to complete it. They succeeded in securing a car that by a lucky chance was passing and speedily disappeared, thoughtfully bequeathing to the rest of us a luncheon basket which kept us alive during the remaining five hours we were destined

to linger on that field. Three young Americans remained; I was determined, perhaps by the sailor's ancestral spirit, to stick by the ship and see this adventure to the end, and La Douce, the only woman left, needed no persuasion to be of the same mind, for she was delighted with everything. She had, indeed, been ill, but with her high French spirit she rose to the occasion and interpreted for the pilot to the Americans, who knew little French, the progress of the situation as it developed; he congratulated her on her 'esprit sportif,' for he knew that none of the other women would ever fly again.

But in a few hours an official message reached Poix from Paris to stop all flying; no planes completed their course that day. We were at last conveyed to Poix in the petrol lorry and received into a ramshackle country hotel where the banging of doors and shutters in the gale all night made sleep impossible. Next morning the official prohibition was maintained. So nothing was left but to bid farewell to M. Gaston, our pilot, and make our way to Beauvais in a little Ford car we found at the hotel. There we lunched in the large dining-room of the Hôtel Continental, familiar to me from of old, looked into the loftiest of cathedrals, took train for Paris, and so towards midnight reached Blois, where, in the rooms engaged by La Douce's brother patiently awaiting us, we at last found rest. It was thirty hours later than we had timed it, and the scheme to avoid trouble and save time had proved a dream. Yet we achieved an adventure we should have been sorry indeed to miss.

AUGUST 9: We have been spending ten warm and sunny days by the rivers of Touraine, with Blois and Amboise and Chinon as the successive centres from which to make delightful excursions or to linger in lazily with no desire to wander afield. It is an expedition I had planned from

of old, for — except for a few days once at Tours — I have never stayed in Touraine, often as I have passed through it while La Douce, French as she is, has never been so far south, and intelligent as she is, has not gathered from the *Contes Drolatiques* of Touraine any skill to recognise a vineyard when for the first time she sees one, so that these days have been full of joyous surprises in a joyous land, and we have both alike savoured the pleasant inns on banks of Loire and Vienne and the pleasant local white wines they give us to drink — these agreeable people who speak such excellent French in this heart of France — and the superb châteaux which are the jewels of French secular architecture.

When I was at Tours ten years ago I went to none of these châteaux; I was reserving them, as I explained to my protesting landlord (without knowing how wise I was), for a later visit. So now I have had an orgy of châteaux. We could not go to all, even of the most famous, and two even of those we went to, Chambord and Cheverny, were tedious. But there remain Blois and Chaumont and Amboise and Chinon, and, above all, Chenonceaux and Azay-le-Rideau. There is a harmony that holds them altogether; they all spring spontaneously out of the French architectural genius, for the most part within the space of a century, and all within this one central province of France, though I would put Chantilly in the same group. Yet such various notes go to make up that harmony! Blois is the most complex and manifold and elaborate; one rightly sees it first because it is the key to them all, and one might well also see it last because its spiral staircase is the climax of their loveliness. But Chinon and Amboise stand fiercely on their barren heights and Chenonceaux or Azay-le-Rideau softly and smoothly in their luxuriant lowland gardens with gentle rivers flowing along their bases, and Chaumont on its cliff gazing dreamily across the wide Loire combines the one with the other. Between them is woven all the genius of

France, from Joan of Arc at rugged Chinon to Rousseau and George Sand at gracious Chenonceaux, the chivalry and the saintliness, the ferocity and the sweetness, kings and their queens and their mistresses, heroes and fanatics and artists. Here, as nowhere else in France, it is all summed up, all brought to a luminous and exquisite point.

As I turn over the leaves of memory, page after delicious page, a page here, and there a page, a few, it seems to me, will long recur in whatever years are to come. Among these, and yet perhaps not oftener than others I name not, I think of the serene evenings of Amboise richly tinting the broad Loire with crimson sunset tones, and imagine how the dying Leonardo, whose mortal remains now lie in some unknown spot on the heights, could not but have gazed curiously on that transformation of dying light; I think of Chenonceaux, where Mary of Scots spent her honeymoon with Francis II, and the simple delightful little triangular room over a buttress of the bridge — they call it Catharine de' Medici's library — which it would be so pleasant to call one's own; I think of those small mediæval houses like castles in the old streets of Chinon where one never grows tired of wandering and of my delight when I saw framed, in one of the upper rooms of a *tourelle*, a solemn cat or a beautiful old woman, just as they had been seen framed there from of old by Rabelais whose house they still point to close to where we dwelt; and I shall still hear the strange exhilarating song wherewith a band of young men awakened me as they cheerfully strolled by the Boule d'Or after a prolonged little local fête. Such fragile pages, and we turn them over with those we love, and of them and the like of them the real book of our lives is made.

AUGUST 27: I notice to-day that a reviewer in our most seriously thoughtful journal, discussing the architecture of the society of the future, incidentally remarks that 'Mr. Havelock Ellis invests Birth Control with the guardianship of Civilisation.' I picture myself, as evidently I exist in this writer's mind, solemnly investing an incarnated Birth Control — not, let us hope, too obscenely incarnated — with the sacred insignia, condoms or pessaries or whatever they may be, of that exalted guardianship. It is an amusing picture. Yet I scarcely recognise its validity.

The Houses of Parliament on the banks of the Thames are, I believe, built of magnesian limestone, a stone on which the poisonous London atmosphere exerts its ever-corrosive action, so that a continual effort of repair is required. If at the time when the Houses of Parliament were built, some intelligent critic had insisted in pointing out to the builders the desirability, the absolute necessity, if a strong and resistant building was to be set up, of choosing a better material, he would not have been usurping the place of the architect, he would merely have been asserting a reasonable condition of good architecture.

Anyone who insists on the desirability, the absolute necessity, if a sound future race is to arise, of care and choice in the control and breeding of men is not investing anything with 'the guardianship of civilisation,' or assuming the function of architect of society. He is merely asserting an elementary condition which must without fail be fulfilled if any worthy civilisation, any sound society, is ultimately to arise.

SEPTEMBER 5: 'And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.'
Jesus has been called, I believe, the greatest master of irony who ever lived, and surely there can never have been

a greater triumph of irony than the statement so gently insinuated into this petition, and now perpetually repeated by millions, even during the Great War. Millions, who genuinely believed that the Germans had 'trespassed' against them, and were still more genuinely occupied in torturing, starving, murdering, and speaking ill of those trespassers, in the intervals of these occupations meekly mumbled in all our churches, as they echoed the brazen voices of their governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters: 'And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.'

We have no Jesus now, nor any Rabelais, to do justice to these wonderful fellow-countrymen of ours, and their dear brethren in other belligerent lands of the War. Besides, it must be a painful subject. It cannot be pleasant for them to realise that, when they reach that next world they so devoutly believe in, the rest of Eternity will have to be spent in the enjoyment of that 'forgiveness' they so liberally bestowed on the Germans.

I am more concerned to know what is wrong with a petition which has long been accepted without protest. And that surely is that the petition is reversed, in the Oriental manner, and that when set right end up it has really a beautiful and helpful meaning. I suppose that 'God,' to whom the petition is addressed, is the name for one's own highest self, since it is evident that no legitimate prayer can ever be answered except one's own best self consents to the answer. To ask that one's own higher self should forgive one's own trespasses is the hardest prayer to answer that we can ever offer up. If we can breathe this prayer, and find it truly answered in a harmony of exalted comprehension and acceptance, then we have learnt what forgiveness is. There is no other way to learn forgiveness. We cannot forgive others in any comprehensible sense unless we have first learnt how to forgive ourselves. So this petition should read: And may we forgive those who trespass against us, As we forgive our own trespasses.

SEPTEMBER 17: On Saturdays the human stream runs along these streets more copiously and rapidly even than usual, each little drop separate and distinct from the others, though so close, each one, cheerful or sad or dull, bent on its own mission, carrying its market-basket for the most part or the net bag stuffed with potatoes and cabbages and all sorts of things to cook, I, among the rest, intent also on my own business. So the stream runs with its rhythmic systole and diastole of day and night. Every day separate drops are falling out of the stream, each drop to be quietly soaked up in its little hole of earth, but none misses them or marks any difference, as I also one day shall drop out and none miss me, or mark any difference, for the stream rolls on unchangingly. When it began, thousands of years ago, a little trickle then, no one knows; no one knows, perhaps still longer thousands of years hence, when it will cease to flow. As it flows, I hear, against a background of rumbling traffic, the sharp cries of street-vendors and the raucous voices of singers on the kerb with the rough notes of their instruments, and while my outer ears are thus assailed, there reigns within a deep and lovely silence, and then perhaps there sounds the faint haunting cadence of the flute of Morocco and the chant of a boy in Savoy heard twenty years ago or over as they fell on the delighted ear of one by my side who will never hear them more, and the meaningless turmoil of the moments fall silent before the things which come out of the past and are incorporated with the texture of my own soul.

So it is that, amid the fleeting procession of the evanescent stream of life that washes across me and leaves no trace, I know nothing better than to weave a net for my dreams. My dreams, too, are of that procession, and they, too, come and in a moment they are gone. In the subtle net I weave they are caught and become a living part of my eternal delight. I, too, in my own way follow the call that of old led the fishers of

Galilee to leave their earthly nets and to become, not, as they thought to be, fishers of mortal men, but the fishers of immortal dreams.

OCTOBER 13: I was wandering to-day about Kew Gardens in the warm sunny air of October days that this year are a perpetual miracle, wandering about to gaze at random at the endlessly variegated and fantastically extravagant plants brought together here from the ends of the earth.

Every plant is absurd. It is even more plain to see, since one is oneself an animal, that every animal is absurd. Moreover, in its absurdity is demonstrated its rationality, for by its absurdity it lives. Every plant, every animal, is, from an evolutionary point of view, a caricature of the genus it has, on reasonable grounds, departed from, while yet retaining to it a recognisable resemblance. Man is the supreme absurdity because he is so poignantly aware of these recognisable resemblances to the other animals of his Family Group. He has to spend most of his life in training himself to try not to recognise them; and civilisation is Man's hopeless effort to cover up and conceal those traits of himself which he regards as specially animal-like. At some moments, when his antics become peculiarly wild, as during the Great War and after, he seems dimly to perceive his own absurdity, but those moments are rare.

Thus Absurdity and Reason are inextricably intertwined into the structure of what we call Life, while yet remaining eternally distinct, and each only to be clearly seen while the other remains dim or unseen. So there arises a problem for everyone who desires to see the world truly and to see it whole. That involves the harmonisation of two discordant attitudes, for he who takes up one alone of these attitudes, whichever it

may be, remains only half a human being. If he is only able to enjoy the absurdity of the world as a spectacle, of if he is merely occupied in solemnly striving to mould and cement it by Reason, he is in either case, a good half-man, but only a half-man. How to be at the same time both? I have always been preoccupied with this problem. For only the rarest great spirits have achieved it, Rabelais, Goethe, possibly Shakespeare had he lived longer. To be the serene spectator of the Absurdity of the world, to be at the same time the strenuous worker in the Rationalisation of the world — that is the function of the complete Man. But it remains a very difficult task, the supreme task in the Art of Living.

OCTOBER 17: The way you make the creature if you are God — or whatever one may choose to call It — is as follows: After well mixing, stirring, and chopping up, you form a tube of two layers of cells and allow them to adhere to each other to form a third. So you have a sack for absorbing food from the circumambient water or air — being careful to leave one or two little holes — and for thereby growing; all the rest follows in time; the outer layer puts forth a sensory and motor nervous system to aid in the nourishing process, and the whole sack puts forth four limbs which gradually elongate and enable the sack to push itself towards the most attractive food streams. Then you place it on its two hind-limbs so that it may swing from one on to the other and so be able to move more rapidly towards its food, as well as to seek after or run away from its fellow-creatures, and generally to debase the face of the earth and destroy all other living things, animal or vegetable, while its two fore-limbs may be used to grab its food and to embrace or to kill its fellows, but both embracing and killing are of less urgent and constant importance to the creature than the work of placing all sorts of

foods and drinks within that voluminous tube which is its primary central self and converting them, by a never-ending process which is the fundamental business of its life, into excretions, a process of such supremely sacred importance that the creatures rarely perform its final phase in public and there is nothing they speak of less, so that even around their kings and queens at banquets, in the days when kings and queens were great, at the moments when the final acts of digestion were accomplished a screen was placed to conceal the dazzling splendour of that vision. The incidental by-play of this central function ran into the strangest directions. The curiosity of these beings reached even to the stars and the world itself could not always fill their hearts. Nothing was so small or so large, so common or so fantastic, as not sometimes to seem worth while to them. That is why this afternoon I see around me, close packed and wrapped in the most variegated rags, a great concourse of these beings, assembled in a hall to listen to one of themselves, one Chaliapin, as he sings the songs which once were the howls of lust and pain and joy in primitive forests.

Fiddling work to make men and women. And little credit to be had out of it. For they are attractive only to each other — when even that — but for all other creatures on earth a terror save only those which are still in the first unhappy stage of ignorance concerning them and those that have long been enslaved to them. The creatures that stand close below them can only suffer and die from that contact. And the creatures that are to stand above them, and will some day in their turn crush them out, are not yet arrived. Meanwhile the God that made This Thing hides his shameful face and can nowhere be found.

NOVEMBER 12: I sometimes think our modern minds hold so little, are such mere half-pint pots, that you can pour nothing fresh into them without first pouring something out. So many people — is it only when they are young? I do not know — cannot gain a fresh appreciation without losing their old appreciations. And they are constantly trying to thrust upon us this fact of their own unfortunate limitations. For instance, here is a man who has just discovered that Croce is a great critic. Well and good: it is true. But he thereupon expends all his energies in belittling Sainte-Beuve! The fine qualities of Sainte-Beuve — not only the most catholic of gourmets in the enjoyment of old literature, however imbecile when he approached his contemporaries, but within his limits the accomplished type of the critic — for him cease to exist because he has discovered the totally different fine qualities of Croce. The half-pint mug this critic attempts to dignify by calling it his skull can no longer hold a drop of Sainte-Beuve now that he has poured into it his admiration for Croce. The same thing is being illustrated every moment to-day in ten thousand different half-pint pots.

It is so remarkable that one is led to wonder, Has Man always been so tame and narrow and unadventurous? Here, for over two thousand years, he has been treading the same little circle in the rounds of time, occupied in the same laborious old task, and each of his footprints, as he comes round to it again, seems a marvellous revelation, merely because a little dust had blown over it and his small brain had forgotten what it looked like last time: states, patriotisms, religions, greeds, wars, states, patriotisms, religions, greeds, wars, over and over again. Never anything really new and of all that is most nearly new nothing that can enlarge or glorify Man himself as a species or further his individual perfection, the process in which, as Socrates said, he could alone attain happiness. It

seems to have been not for nothing that Early Man possessed so capacious a skull. All the great discoveries, the great inventions, the great revelations, even the beginning of the sciences on which we chiefly pride ourselves — though they mean so little — all were due to Early Man. Clothing and fire and cooking and tools and the metals and pastoralism and agriculture and town-planning, with the sublime ideas on which he has been spiritually living ever since, all were achieved by Early Man. In his days, it may well have been a joy to live, though the exhilaration of it had ample time to evaporate in ages that were so spacious. There has been nothing left for modern man, these thousands of years, but just to tramp round in the same familiar circle, states, patriotisms, religions, greeds, wars, mere by-products, all of them, of the great adventures of Early Man. — And the wretched little beast has grown so complacent over it all!

DECEMBER 20: 'One of the most obvious characteristics of the Chinese,' I find Bertrand Russell saying this week, 'is their love of fireworks. On arriving at a Chinese temple, the worshipper is given a set of Chinese crackers to explode on the temple steps, so as to put him in a good humour. When I invited the most intellectual young students to an evening party, they sent several days ahead extraordinarily elaborate *feux d'artifice* to be let off in my courtyard. I did not find any Chinaman, however grave, who failed to enjoy these occasions.'

Now this interests me. For some time past, in exploring the works of Bergson, who is, I suppose, one of the most conspicuous and popular philosophers of modern times, I have noted how fireworks play all through them. It is an image that he is always invoking: even allied images constantly tend to appear: phosphorescence, luminous cores, the flickering of

half-extinguished lamps, kaleidoscopes, cinematographs — all these things in their sparkling coruscating streams express for Bergson the movement of human experience or the process of human knowledge. But it is especially — and most so in *L'Évolution Créatrice* — on fireworks that he dwells. He would have us see the world as 'quelque chose comme le chemin que se fraye la dernière fusée du feu d'artifice parmi les débris qui retombent des fusées éteintes,' and consciousness itself as 'la fusée dont les débris éteintes retombent en matière'; and even the famous *élan vital* is defined as essentially an effort to accumulate energy in a cylinder from the end of which it is discharged in infinitely varied play: why not say a rocket? The best preparation for the comprehension of Bergson's philosophy might, it seems, be a course of lessons on pyrotechnics, of which the last might take as its text the words of Bartoli, who is not a Bergsonian, but mainly concerned with cosmic phenomena: 'God is the Great Pyrotechnist of the Universe.'

At the core of every philosopher's heart, it may well be, there lies some simple clue which, when we have found it, may guide us through the maze of his work. That was long ago pointed out in detail by Alexander Fraser. Vision is the key to the philosophies of Berkeley and Hume, and to a less degree those of Hobbes and Locke; Hegel was obsessed by electricity, and so on.

Now the way is clear to accept Bergson as in the same great tradition. We see, moreover, that the ancient people now enthusiastically acclaimed as the deepest philosophers, the most exquisite lovers of beauty, the wisest artists in life the world has ever known, are above all peoples the amateurs of fireworks. So that if Bergson has spent his life in gravely exploding crackers on the temple steps he is in the end justified, and the devotees of this much-debated philosophy of fireworks may henceforth worship in peace.

DECEMBER 21: Week after week, week after week, there is nothing to jar the placid routine of life in this remote spot. In front is always the sea and the deep continuous murmur of its surge, now and then lashed into a roar by the wind which then, too, mingles its shriek in the music, and at night, in the trees behind, sometimes the soft and comforting tu-whoo of the owl. In the evening one sits on the little verandah and looks down on the valley below as it opens to the cove; and the sprinkled little cottages, as twilight falls, one by one show forth the softly gleaming lights of their windows through the gloom, gentle reassuring light-houses, while behind the heights on the right, a mile afar, the real Lizard Light slowly revolves its great solemn flame to sweep across the sky and search the sea beneficently for those who need illumination upon the dangerous track.

I have never lived so near that light before. But all my life, it almost seems, the Lizard Light has formed part of the familiar background of my mind. As a child I knew it for the last southerly point of England which one sadly left behind to flicker out as one plunged into the broad Atlantic. Again, years later, still on the threshold of the world, in days that were full of great and tremulous hopes, from the attic window of my room at Lamorna, for me a hallowed spot such as Rousseau desired to surround with a balustrade of gold, I could see afar the sweet and inspiring gleam of the Lizard Light. Now, at last, when I please myself with thinking that life is over, for the first time I dwell close beside it.

A lighthouse is one of the most beautiful things of man's creation on land, and so worthy to mate with a ship, which is one of the most beautiful things anywhere. At all events they were so once. In later times men have had less care to see to it that beautiful things should really seem beautiful. When one has seen the modern Lizard Lighthouse one has no special wish to give it a second glance. But see Smeaton's

old Eddystone Lighthouse, reërected on Plymouth Hoe, and the one lovely thing in that town, a finely wrought dream with its exquisite curves and its delicate lantern.

The lighthouse is still a beautiful symbol as it once was a beautiful reality. It stands for the supreme function of Man on earth, and of each one of us within the radius of his own small circle. To transform the spirit of love into light that shall illuminate the night of life for those who pass darkly through it — that is the function of the lighthouse, and the humblest human glowworm who is merely true to himself is instinctively doing just that.

So as I watch the little casements in the valley below grow bright, and as the huge beam of the Lizard revolves behind the heights, I softly repeat to myself those words of Coleridge's which so often linger in my mind, as once in the mind of one who is no longer near me seeking to embody them: 'I am not fit for public life, yet the light shall stream to a far distance from the taper in my cottage window.'

DECEMBER 22: Here I have been finding time to read a few volumes of the *Historiettes* of Tallemant des Réaux, which I began to read long ago — at the time, it chanced, when Remy de Gourmont was doing the same, no doubt for his *Collection des Plus Belles Pages*, for he sent me just then a note or two from Tallemant on points that seemed to him to concern me — but I had to put the *Historiettes* aside.

It is a work well worth reading. The seventeenth century is the Great Age of France on its most classic and virile side, the age of intellect and energy and passion, the age when Catholics and Huguenots could still jostle each other fiercely as equals until the final Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which seemed to emasculate the virility of France, even al-

though it opened the way for the Great Age of France on the more feminine side, the new century that was initiated on the literary side by the exquisite and sensitive genius of Marivaud, for one can only marvel contemptuously at those obtuse critics who still babble of 'Marivaudage,' being unable to distinguish the new delicacy of sentiment he brought into France — as in a slighter degree his equally distinguished contemporary Congreve in England — from affectation and mannerism.

Thus Tallemant's age was at once a time of climax and of transition — the climax of one side of the French genius, the transition to another totally different yet equally wonderful aspect of that genius — and it has the fascination, the curious self-consciousness, which belong to such an age of transition. There are many indeed who feel that the seventeenth century in France is the most complete manifestation of the French spirit, if it is possible to speak so definitely of a spirit which has so many and such diverse sides.

Tallemant des Réaux resembled Aubrey who was at the same time doing in England what he was doing in France, and in exactly the same manner, though on a smaller and rather humbler scale. But I cannot help comparing Tallemant des Réaux with Pepys who was also writing at about the same time and in the like spirit of frank and intimate revelation. They are even of the same class in their manner of writing and their success in a kind where success is rare indeed. Pepys has that same careless felicity, that instinctive power of touching the naked fact, by which in the end we learn to regard him as a supreme master. It is a rare gift and even a dangerous one; for of a thousand writers who are careless and instinctive, but one may possess it, and even he will most of the time flounder in unnecessary words. That, no doubt, was why it was so long before Stendhal was recognised as a supreme master, and one can well understand how Flaubert experienced so enormous a distaste for Stendhal. Flau-

bert and Stendhal stand at the opposing extremes of style, and that is why there are so few who cherish a deep devotion to both writers and can never grow tired of reading either. There is, indeed, a difference between Tallemant and Pepys which goes beyond the fact that Tallemant was concerned with a more richly varied, a more robust, a more unrestrained society than Pepys was in England, where, I am almost inclined to say, the eighteenth century began rather earlier than in France, and it is a significant fact that Saint-Evremond, who was the precursor, half a century beforehand, of the spirit of the French eighteenth century, spent the greater part of his life congenially as an exile in London and had no wish to return to his own land. The difference I mean is that there are two sides to Pepys' *Diary*; on one side it is an unconscious psychological masterpiece of self-portraiture, and on the other side a picture of the age. In the *Diary* this latter side, fascinating and veracious as it is, incomparably above any other picture of that age, unsurpassed indeed as an intimate picture of any age, has turned out to be of secondary interest. But in Tallemant it is of primary importance and covers all the field, any self-portraiture being insignificant. Tallemant was of good birth, and he had travelled; he had from youth moved familiarly among a vast crowd of the most famous and conspicuous men and women of his day; he had the advantage of being in close touch with the Hôtel de Rambouillet, where ruled a spirit which was a protest against the spirit of the age, and so he was aided to see life from both sides; he was at the same time a great receptacle for scandal, he had a remarkable memory, and he was perpetually taking notes; his mind was veracious and impartial, though always ready to incline to the malicious side — his summaries of character are sometimes violently opposed to the official epitaphs — and with this he possessed a careless disordered pen that combined, from time to time with rare felicity, the

plain direct frankness of the age that was passing away with the flexible facility and detail of the age that was approaching. It turned out to be a combination which, though it failed to produce a style that was harmoniously beautiful or personal, was yet admirably fitted for the great task which he accomplished. Here in this negligent and precise narrative — inaccurate, we may be sure in many details, unjust in many separate judgments, yet completely right in the whole picture — we have the final and perfect presentation of the Great Age of France. Here is its splendour, its colour, its insolence, its turbulence, its violence, its license, its easy indifference to cunning or lust or blood, audacious and grotesque, its adventurous and dare-devil and imbecile men, its witty and outrageous and domineering women. All that world passes in procession before us in the *Historiettes* of Tallemant des Réaux, and, so far as I know, we may see it nowhere else so vividly.

DECEMBER 23: I have just been reading a long article on Amiel. It appears it was lately the centenary of that diarist's birth, so it is a commendable occasion for evoking his memory. But, to my judgment, the essayist rates him a little too highly, a little too nearly in accordance with Amiel's own estimate.

Even as I write there chances to come into my hands the December *Nouvelle Revue Française* which publishes some of the suppressed pages of Amiel's *Journal Intime*. (For it has only been a Bowdlerised version of the *Journal* that the world has yet known, in accordance with a lamentable human weakness which has spoilt for us the work of greater men than Amiel, for it is Man himself who, in his hypocritical way, has made the late Mr. Bowdler the scapegoat upon whose head to place a vice that is his own.) These fragments not only

seem to indicate that Amiel's spiritual weakness was really also his physical nervous weakness, but they show him to us as taking a most modest, indeed even unduly humble, view of his own personality: 'Ni homme ni femme tout à fait, je suis demeuré amorphe, atone, agame, neutre, tiède et partagé. Pouah!'

It is a great many years since I read Amiel. He was little known then and had not been translated, as I believe he has since. If I remember aright, I was, in part, induced to read him by coming across an admiring essay by a new writer, a Mrs. Humphry Ward (the name is probably unknown to the present generation), whose later writings I never had any temptation to read; but in larger part, no doubt, by the essay on Amiel in those almost epoch-marking *Essais de Psychologie Contemporaine*, so precious to the youth of my generation who turned with repugnance from Bourget's later work. I read Amiel all through, with care, as in those days I always read books. Indeed, there was a certain interest in him from various points of view, and also a notable though minor gift, casual yet penetrating, of criticism. But the total impression he made on me was profoundly unsatisfactory; to my own mind he was alien, even a little contemptible, possibly a little repulsive. So he remains: a small man, without even the merit of being a typical representative of an age, a representative only of a type, as such admirable, at the same time the representative of those people who seem to have been meant for religion (Tolstoy was another and far grander type of the same sort), yet who never reach that process of 'conversion' — a process which is always outside the power of one's own will to attain — which brings complete harmony and serene union with the Universe. That for similarly dissatisfied and fastidious persons innately in conflict with the Universe he should be congenial and admirable I well conceive. But my own opinion, for whatever it may be worth, remains firm.

Amiel's *Journal* is one long and endlessly ingenious apology, in which he seeks to explain to himself why he has never made a figure in the world. He is convinced that he had it in him to be great. But he possesses such very lofty qualities, and they have held him back from stretching out his hand to grasp the success which was within his reach. A love of perfection, a disdain for all that is below the highest, a fine scrupulosity of conscience, an inexhaustible thirst for an unattainable God — all these beautiful qualities of his soul, and others of a like sort I can no longer recall, have been his ruin.

It was all a delusion. As a matter of fact he had tried his best to be all he could. He had put forward his attempts to be a poet and a critic, without any scruples at all on account of their poverty. When at length he turned to self-analysis in his *Journal*, it was not a substitute for achievement, it was, on the contrary, the only achievement he had in him to make. And he made it to the uttermost, though we may question whether it was worth making. He squeezed into the fourteen thousand manuscript pages of his *Diary* every drop that was in him. He produced, for whatever it may be worth, the finest apology for spiritual impotence that has ever been written. It is no doubt a consoling book for people of the same kind who cannot themselves write. It is also a valuable psychological document.

DECEMBER 26: The splendid exuberance and extravagance of the Great Age of France would never have been adequately recorded if Tallemant des Réaux had not possessed the caustic daring pen that never hesitated to set down anything he had seen or heard, however outrageous, however scandalous, however obscene, though for the immediately following period we should still have the same kind of caustic pen, with a very firm feminine

personality behind it, in the letters of Madame, the mother of the Regent. There is no great age unless a man is alive with the genius to set it down in that spirit. To the Great Age of Louis XIV in France corresponds the Great Age of Elizabeth in England, and we are fortunate to possess a whole band of prolific dramatists who made it their task to transfer all the wild turbulence and humorous eccentricity and magnificent tragedy of that age into a fantastic and endlessly varied procession of figures across the stage. If it had not been for that gay and bloody spectacle, there would for us have been no age of great Elizabeth, merely the pale shadows of figure dimly deciphered from musty documents in the Record Office.

Since the seventeenth century there has, so far as is generally known, been no great age, and if there has, since there was no one with the spirit and the daring of Tallemant des Réaux, or of the followers of Shakespeare and Middleton, to record it, that age has gone with the last year's snows. In the nineteenth century literature withdrew into the withdrawing room, and whether there was any real life left is now matter for dispute. The atmosphere of primness and prudery is too thick to enable us easily to discern.

I was born into that age. It must have been by a wholesome and natural impulse that I swiftly reacted against the gods that in literature it set up and worshipped. It is indeed inevitable that there should always be people who rebel against their own age. But that also has not invariably been altogether successful. One can well understand how fiercely Baudelaire resented those French writers of his time who, he declared, with the minds of barn-door fowls, gloated over excrement and called their depravity 'le sel gaulois.' One has seen something similar outside France. There are always among us the feeble folk who suppose they can escape from primness and prudery by cultivating baseness and triviality, not realising that they are thereby merely using the same old

counters upside down. It is not by the ugly and vulgar side of those counters, any more than by the prim and prudish side, that the world can be created anew. It is only beauty that counts, and beauty can never be a mere counter because it is always eternally new. The great artist is for ever enlarging the scope of human art and embracing things with love that have never been known in art before. He can only do that by making them beautiful, and the would-be artist who brings into what he calls his art things that are ugly and remain just as ugly after he has touched them is nothing in the world. Man has travelled a long way through the ages, and there is no room in the treasures of his brain to store up any memories of his course that are not of beauty. As far back along our path as we look, there is nothing left standing which is not beautiful to see. All the experiences of the race are ever passing through a process of chemical transmutation. Look at Napoleon: think what a sinister, bloody, and devastating being he seemed to the men who lived near his age, and now, one of the most penetrating and fervidly critical minds of our own day, Élie Faure, finds that Napoleon is a great artist, the lyrical poet in real life, and worthy of a place among the supreme dreamers. That is typical of Man's dealings in so far as he is true to the human function. He is for ever crushing within his heart all the tragedy and the comedy of his long career, to express from them an essence of beauty, the everlasting fragrance and cordial that lures him up the stony path.

DECEMBER 29: Two or three years ago I found on a local bookstall a number of the earliest volumes of *Once a Week* which began in 1859. I carried away two, paying the few pence that were demanded, the next day two more, and finally all that were left. They have been to me

a source of refreshment and delight ever since. A vanished age it seems to belong to, this exquisite efflorescence of English art on wood. Who was the editor to reveal so fine a judgment I have no knowledge. In literature, also, his taste was admirable (the ignored George Meredith and the youthful unknown Swinburne, with George Borrow and others of only less renown, are here), but it is by the magnificent company of artists he here brought together that *Once a Week* will always remain memorable. They were not famous then, or it might not have been possible to shepherd them altogether, but nevertheless some of them, afterwards most famous, scarcely equalled their early achievements in the drawings on these pages. Millais, Poynter, Holman Hunt, Sandys, Frederick Shields, Simeon Solomon, Charles Keene, Tenniel, Du Maurier, Frederick Walker, Whistler — what a wonderful group! And the interesting point is that while they are in a manner harmonised by the uniformity of the medium of reproduction, they are far from forming a school; nearly every one of them is already in those days — sometimes indeed even more than in later days — an individual artist with his own temperament, his own vision, his own technique. Millais I would certainly put first, for he worked with a genius which later he dissipated. He is here the true interpreter of the beauty of the Victorian period. All the details of that life — its formal conventions, the fittings of the houses, the garments of the men, above all its women with their vast crinolines and the quaint prim ways of doing their hair — are brought before us with a severe realism which becomes poetry because the artist has such distinguished taste, so fine and sure a hand, scarcely English, indeed, almost French, as Millais's origin might lead us to expect. The Victorian Age is here immortalised as the England of half a century earlier was immortalised by the genius of Rowlandson, who also was in his best moments both realist and poet, a wilder and more

fantastic poet than Millais. Then there was Frederick Walker with a more limited and subdued force — realistic too, but more English he, with a touch of sentiment — who was for rural Victorian England what Millais was for middle-class urban England. And yet another world belongs to Charles Keene; with a rarer skill than any other purely English artist has ever brought to the delineation of vulgarity, without ever failing in distinction, he has presented the higher comedy, leaving to Leech, who is also here, the lower comedy, of Victorian plebeian life. There could be no greater contrast to all these than Sandys; he was a dreamer, a rare and solitary worker, who sought to embody in concrete visions the spirit of romance; music seems to float around his finest images, but of realism there is never a trace. Finally — to say nothing of the rest, individual as they all were — there was Whistler, already with all that finesse, that alluring fastidiousness, that eclectic echo of great masters of old, which marked his subsequent work in time. It is a large and incomparable group — for the others are only just below these and not always below — of variously and harmoniously endowed artists. If any other age or any other land ever brought together within the boards of one publication so glorious a company of contemporary artists, one would be indeed thankful to know of it.

It has long been a source of satisfaction to me that I was born in the year, not only of *The Origin of Species*, but of *Once a Week* and even, in a sense, within the sphere in which these artists worked. My earliest recollections are of one of the group who lived next door to my childhood's home in Cherry Orchard Road, the vision of a painter at work with palette and brush; I still recall the picture he was painting. It is true that in these early volumes of *Once a Week* I fail to find Robert Barnes. But he was one of the group, and while not one of the first in eminence he was perhaps the most prolific and with

a recognised and honourable place of his own. He presented to the small boy one of his best works, an illustrated edition of Mrs. Barbauld's beautiful *Hymns* in free verse, perhaps the earliest book I ever possessed, and mine still. I recall him as a thin, fair, consumptive young man, lately married but hardly expected to live, though he lived to a good age and brought up a large family and attained prosperity. He helped to illustrate many of the magazines of that time, and my childish perception of art found exercise in learning to recognise his hand instantly before catching sight of the 'R. B.' in the corner. It was not, however, highly individualised work, of a peaceful and graceful kind, the reflection of the more serenely happy aspect of Victorian domestic life.

I learnt later, through my friend Roden Noel, to know a more highly accredited member of the band, Frederick Shields. He was not indeed, in my estimate, a great artist, for he was tempted to undertake ambitious projects which were beyond his powers and scope. But he was in temperament a true artist and the type of what a Pre-Raphaelite might be expected to be. I recall his spiritual face, his feminine, almost caressing gesture as he led me by the arm into his studio, his high-pitched voice that was almost broken in moments of rapture when he talked of the great things in art; there seemed in him then a touch of the ethereal spirit of a Shelley. He died long ago; they are all dead now. But in these drawings the Victorian Age will still live and for their sake it will seem worth remembering.

Some day, perhaps, our own Georgian Age will seem worth remembering. Heaven knows for what!

JANUARY 5, 1922: As I read Tallemant des Réaux I perceive that the impression that is formed in me of the freedom and gaiety of life against the background of

tragedy, the impression of boundless extravagance, of immense diversity, is in large part due not only to the narrator's power of presentation, but to the actual presence in that life of elements which to-day also exist in the world but are at once suppressed by our modern organisation of society.

I know that there were sadly and terribly petty influences on the life of seventeenth-century France, imposed by powerful institutions which, if not indeed society itself, were important sections of society. There was Puritanism in the world, as there always and everywhere has been, and it has always been ready to associate itself, unnecessarily, with hypocrisy and all that 'cant' which was once foolishly supposed to be peculiarly British, though it is common in France, and everywhere else, however its forms may vary. It was rampant, as we sometimes forget, even in the Great Age of France, this seventeenth century of Tallemant des Réaux. The Société du Saint-Sacrement was almost as powerful as the Inquisition in Spain. It even pursued Ninon de Lenclos, treating her as a common prostitute, and harshly even at that, though we cannot properly regard her as a prostitute at all (as is not always recognised by modern writers who have not asked themselves what they mean by the term); they were even able for a time to drive her out of Paris and shut her up in a convent from which only high influence retrieved her. And so, again, it was with Molière, who also was for a time an exile from Paris, and it was with difficulty, with the exercise of much precaution, that he avenged himself on his enemies with *Tartuffe*.

But I am thinking now, as I read the *Historiettes*, of an element of freedom in the social life of that age which was apart from Puritanism, due to the absence of a restraining influence which has since been rigid. Pepys recorded how in that same age an eminent Quaker was wont to come, unmolested, to Westminster, clad only in a loin cloth, to call the world to

repentance. We do not know how many souls he saved, but at least he added to the gaiety of those souls he failed to save. He harmed no one and he helped to variegate the world; for those who achieve that end we must always be endlessly grateful. But to-day that picturesque Quaker would be impossible, he would scarcely have taken a step before being carried off to Police Court and Lunatic Asylum, to his own misery, the anxiety of his friends, and the expense of the public.

As I read the narratives of Tallemant, I come from time to time on the picture of people who perform the most outrageous actions or lead the most fantastic lives, and Tallemant writes of them in as matter-of-fact a way as though he were Nature himself. He finds them of great interest, well worth setting down. But he never protests. The idea that they might with benefit be shut up in some prison or prison-like public institution never occurs to him. Of that place, so terrible in its social consequence, we call in England a Lunatic Asylum, he seems never to have heard. That is why the world he describes is often so uncomfortable and even dangerous a world; but that also is largely why it is so extravagant and so splendid.

In this matter Tallemant des Réaux is not peculiar. The world never knew the 'lunatic,' in the large and special sense in which we use that term, until the last century or two. As we understand the matter now, as soon as a man acts in a way rather different from the way in which the majority of people act, we call him 'insane' — though we have not the faintest notion of what 'insanity' is — and we feel so alarmed concerning the mischief he may do, though in fact he may be doing no mischief, and even be doing good, that we shut him up at once, without any idea of 'curing' him, for that may clearly be beyond our limited powers, but simply to purge the world of his undesirable presence. It seems to me that we

have never clearly realised all that this means and all that it involves.

There is, for instance — to take the example which often comes to me because I was able to follow it through many years — the case of Chidley in Australia. He was a remarkable man, peculiar, morbid, neurotic, without a shadow of doubt, but of original mind, of immense force of character, of ruthless sincerity. (His autobiography, still unpublished, is unsurpassed, for relentless self-revelation, among documents in this kind, and is possibly the most notable book that has yet come out of Australia.) He believed in simplicity of living and a fruit diet and sunbaths and sexual joy rendered sacred and ecstatic by the discipline of rarity, and with these wholesome opinions he mingled more fantastic themes, for which, however, he found a certain scientific support. He was wont to go out like the seventeenth-century Quaker to call people to repentance, clothed in much the same sort of scanty garment, and with as burning a desire to save the world as any old martyr or apostle. The Sydney police were worried; they harassed him as much as possible; but he was guilty of no serious disturbance of public order and he quietly persisted. Then, at last, they had a splendid idea. They bethought them of the doctors; they haled Chidley before the alienists; and he was shut up in a Lunatic Asylum. He issued passionate protests, he had influential friends, for some time the issue wavered to and fro, but nevertheless it was in the Asylum that finally he died. There is no charge whatever to bring against either the police or the doctors. The Lunatic Asylum is a Government institution; they honestly followed, to the best of their ability, its usual rules as established by law. It is just because their action was so regular, so legal, so unimpeachable, that it is so ominous a potent.

Chidley was a man consumed by a passion for reforming

modern society, and for a new religion of Nature. He was of the type of all the men who had brought new ideals of life and feeling into the world. Without such men, who wave a flaming torch to stir the torpor of humanity and form on its path ahead a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, the world becomes a dreary wilderness. If the Lunatic Asylum as at present established had existed three thousand years ago, we may or may not have had Greece and Rome — it is doubtful — but we should certainly have had no Old Testament and no New. The Hebrew religion would have perished of anæmia and the Christian religion could never have been born. Nearly all the prophets of the Jews from Samuel on are patients for the alienists and candidates for the Asylum. Had there been a Lunatic Asylum in the suburbs of Jerusalem, Jesus Christ would infallibly have been shut up in it at the outset of his public career. That interview with Satan on a pinnacle of the Temple would alone have damned him, and everything that happened after could but have confirmed the diagnosis. The whole religious complexion of the modern world is due to the absence from Jerusalem of a Lunatic Asylum.

After Jesus the greatest revolutionary spiritual force in our world was Luther. He, who had once thrown his inkpot at the Devil in person, could scarcely have escaped the Asylum. The greatest after him was Rousseau, the spiritual renovator of our world, and he was at times definitely insane. It happily chanced that these men lived before our modern conception of the 'lunatic' was formulated and acted upon. They could never have lived in our world.

For, to-day, our world is a spiritually emasculated world. The Lunatic Asylum is an instrument for spiritual castration. It fails to grip the people, often highly placed, whose morbidity is really dangerous to society. For the rest, it seizes at random, among worst or best, those who are the refuse of

society, and those who, while perhaps dangerous for themselves and a nuisance to those around them, may yet have it in them to be, for all we know, the benefactors of society, its reformers, its saints, its martyrs, even its gods.

In Paris, in what is now merely a large Place, there once stood a great fortress-prison called the Bastille. To it were consigned people whom society or the Government found troublesome to the conventional routine of law and order. Some of the greatest spirits of France, together with others less great and sometimes more genuinely insane, were at one time or another confined there, not to be medically treated — it can scarcely be said that the inmates of the modern analogues of that institution receive much treatment — but to be suppressed, often quite benevolently and sometimes even desirably suppressed, for the Bastille was not so black as it has been painted. When the Bastille was destroyed, a great shout of joy went up, for it was thought that the human spirit had been at last liberated, and the anniversary of its fall is still the National Holiday of France. It was not realised that in its place other Bastilles would spring up all over the field of civilisation, and of yet more solid structure. So the old task of destroying Bastilles again presents itself to mankind. And either they will be destroyed or the soul of man will.¹

¹ This statement may seem extreme, yet, two years later, in the *London Times* of 14 March, 1924, I find a letter, entitled 'Tests of Lunacy,' by one of the leading English authorities on insanity and asylums. He here makes the following remarks concerning insanity: 'Conduct and speech are its most obvious and definite indications, and in the normal thinking man these are appropriate to the occasion; conduct which is tolerated and suitable for Whitechapel would be a strong indication of insanity in Mayfair. As high an authority upon the subject as has ever contributed to its elucidation — the late Dr. Mercier — taught students that insanity was a failure of adaptation to environment.' In other words, the whole progress of civilisation — which is the effort to adapt the environment to Man instead of adapting Man to the environment — is 'insanity'; and, further, the conduct of every representative of a high culture amid the differing environment of a lower culture — which he seeks not to

JANUARY 9: Every morning as I lie in bed on the hillside of this valley over the sea, just as it grows light, a thrush begins to sing. I do not quite know where he is; he seems near, but I have never been able to see him, and though his song is sweet he has no pretensions to be among the great songsters, even seems aware that that is so and perfectly content. His song is very deliberate, varied, and I especially note how frequently the phrases fall into triplets, never, indeed, ending on triplets, always on single or double phrases, but the substance often in triplets, as indeed it frequently is among birds.

I am led on to reflect that it is not so only with the song of birds. The same unconscious tendency is also in Man. When, in a solitary mood of sad or tender memory, we murmur involuntarily some aching word or phrase or invoke some lost beloved name, it falls unconsciously into triplets. It is the number three which frames those movements of Man's which are deepest and most sacred and most significant. There are Three in the Deified Family, and the Trinity is the Christian symbol of God, while there is never anything holy or mysterious in the number two, but quite the reverse.

Perhaps it may be that we feel that all the practical activities of the daily real world go by twos. It is by two eyes that we see the world and by two hands that we make use of it and by two legs that we move across it. Our whole life is a twofold alternation of day and night between the twofold doors of

adapt himself to but to adapt to himself — is strong evidence of insanity.' If in Europe Man had been content with what for this eminent alienist is 'sanity' he would still be a savage adapting himself to the environment of a primeval forest; if individual men of high aspirations had been similarly 'sane,' no missionary of any lofty social or religious faith would ever have gone out into the world to raise the moral level of humanity, nor any pioneer in art and science revealed new beauty and new knowledge. Were this letter written to the *Times* merely to illustrate the argument in the text it could not have been written more to the point.

Life and Death. But as soon as we go beyond, as soon as we reach three, it is another matter. There is no longer any end. We are on the threshold of the Infinite. Three becomes our symbol of Eternity.

So now I begin to understand my thrush's song, and now I know why that little artist instinctively feels that while he may introduce the note of the Infinite into his song, he must always wind it round with life and bring it to end on earth.

JANUARY 12: There had been a strong wind during the night and I sat at the end of the tiny green peninsula stretching out into this little bay which is almost open sea, and watched the endlessly fascinating rhythm of the waves that surge forward to break into clouds of fine spray against the rocks. What are they like?

I do not know what they are like. Nothing I can think of, even though I have, almost automatically, brought in the image of clouds, conveys the same exhilarating sense of mighty force and ethereal lightness. All the metaphors and similes degrade it or render it perversely fantastic. 'It is like steam,' said a friend who is a poet, to whom I mentioned my difficulty; but in a sense that is what it is, yet steam is a completely misleading word to use; 'like smoke,' he added. But it is only like smoke in the most superficial way, for smoke is apperceived quite differently; it has nothing of the delicacy and purity, the stimulating tactile and olfactory thrill, which the spray suggests, even when one is not actually experiencing its contact. The spectacle is itself; and it becomes less itself, and less full of enlarging pleasure to the soul, when one seeks to apply to it images that only degrade it in the hierarchical order of Nature.

In metaphorical poetry, indeed, we ought never to find the greater compared to the less, the superior to the inferior. We

then only reach 'Conceits,' and are left frigid. It is a defect of Shakespeare's endlessly fresh and unfathomable sonnets, regarded as love-poems, that they frequently fall into this error, though it was not a common error of the Shakespearian age, and much commoner in the immediately succeeding period, when a new spiritual Orientation — more realistic, more precise, more physically intimate, the ideal of prose — was slowly being achieved. (At a yet later period it was much easier, we may significantly note, though for a different reason, for Shelley than for Keats to make love-poems, not because Keats was more prosaic, but because he felt things less in their visual values than Shelley, more in their precise tactile values, and that constitutes the most difficult aspect of love to render in poetry or to mate with adequate metaphors other than conceits.) It would be legitimate for a culicine poet to compare the flea of his adoration to a lioness, but a feline poet who compared the bounds of his lioness to those of a flea — even though these are really much more wonderful — would from the standpoint of feline æsthetics have fallen into a serious error. Herbert of Cherbury, amid the dreary conceits of his love poetry has one cry of exultant felicity:

Have waves the curling of your hair?

But we cannot turn that about and adequately invoke hair when we are speaking of waves. We cannot find adequate similes for the breakers on the rocky coast even in the most fascinating phenomena of the human body, simply because we have here reached that farthestmost limit beyond which no greater or higher object of comparison in that kind exists on our earth. There is nothing else that so easily displays so mighty a force and is at the same time of such ethereal and delicate lightness.

Yet we cannot avoid metaphor and all speech is full of it. Primitive man seems to have begun with metaphor. Each

new thing that came before him he learnt to know and to name in terms of some better known thing. And poetry, which is a primitive mode of expression, seeks to create a new world and new names in precisely the same way. One has only to turn to Homer — who, however remote he may now seem from the primitive, began our European poetry — to see what a deliberately large part the metaphor and especially the simile play in his mind. He lived by the sea, he knew the sea well, according to tradition he was buried by it, and the sea is one of his frequent similes. But — whether by instinctive skill in art or merely because Nature was not then the primary subject of poetry — while he compares other things to the sea, he never compares the sea to other things, he happily avoids the error of comparing the greater to the less.

The poets of a more complex stage of civilisation adopt a rather different method. There often occur to my mind the words of Keats concerning the 'priestlike task of pure ablution,' but, however right and beautiful that metaphor may be, it has gone beyond the primitive function of metaphor; it is not explaining the unknown by the known; it is adding subtlety to simplicity, and sanctification to the obvious.

Is it not clear that the metaphor and the simile, in their substantial sense, and though they are still archaistically used by the poet, really belonged to the elementary stage of the human mind? We cannot taste the full beauty of any natural thing until we are sufficiently grown up to realise that it is only degraded, or at best perverted, by being compared to any other thing. We do not learn to understand it by placing it in a class to which it cannot truly be said to belong. We only grasp it through the intuition that it is unique.

JANUARY 18: Among the men of to-day there are many who cherish, or at all events believe that they cherish, a profound antagonism to Beauty. They are repelled by it, they are suspicious of it, they have no impulse to seek after it. There is something else, they seem to feel, better worth admiring and seeking after.

Quite natural! I am tempted to exclaim. The generation that made the Great War was trained up in Ugliness and it is natural that they should make Ugliness their God. One must respect their devotion. For my own part, I am inclined to say, I am well content that it should be so. If in this matter there is one thing I above all dislike, it is that the shrine at which I worship should be profaned by the hoofs of the herd.

But that would not only be too Pharisaic an attitude, as of old they would have termed it, but also too superficial. For those to-day who think they condemn Beauty are merely suffering — as so many do in our world — from the weakness of their muddled heads. It is not the things that are beautiful they are turning from; it is the things that have ceased to be beautiful. And that is a very different matter. In every age — it is nowhere seen more clearly illustrated than in the history of our own poetic literature during the past three centuries — convention and the usage of dull formality are ever wearing away what is beautiful in speech. In every age the pioneer is called upon to penetrate daringly into the unknown and capture new shapes of loveliness, even though in doing so he cannot fail often to bring back what is trivial, banal, extravagant, absurd. It has always been so. That is why Cowley is so significant a figure in our literature; however hidden his inestimable service may still be to those who see only his failures, all the greatest of his immediate successors knew better. That again is why Wordsworth, whose mistakes, if less absurd, were much more tedious, has a place in literature

that is also great even beyond his achievements. And to-day we need not be surprised if, in reaction against the immense Victorian popularity of the followers of Tennyson — who is not any the less on that account a supreme artist — there are those to-day who seek a new austerity and a new severity, even though they sometimes confuse it with what is merely bizarre or even repulsive. For Beauty is served even of those who know not her name.

For my own part, I am quite content that I have always worshipped consciously at that shrine. Beauty, when the vision is purged to see through the outer vesture, is Truth, and when we can pierce to the deepest core of it is found to be Love. This is a goddess whom I have worshipped sometimes in the unlikeliest places, perhaps even where none else saw her, and she has given wine to my brain, and oil to my heart, and wings to my feet over the stoniest path. No doubt the herd will trample down my shrine some day, yet still worshipping Beauty, even without knowing it.

But I shall no longer be there.

FEBRUARY 7: When I look into Sadger's lately published *Lehre von den Geschlechtsverirrungen* — or indeed into almost any psychoanalytic book that is not English or American, but perhaps especially this of Sadger's, for it is so relentless and so precise — I seem to see a hand that is pointed towards an approaching new horizon of the human spirit. I am careful not to say that I see the new horizon itself. That only exists in my own mind, for these books are too pedestrian, too prosaic, too (as they used to say before 'matter' was recognised as a poetic fiction) materialistic, for so large a gesture. Yet they really point the way towards the direction in which poets and prophets will raise the curtain that covers the new horizon. They are doing more, they are actually

laying the foundations of the structure on which the poets and prophets will stand. They are even themselves revealing on one aspect the new vision of the human soul. For they are like the Hans Andersen child who saw that the Emperor had no clothes on. They have demonstrated the fact that Man, who fancied he had dressed himself in such fantastic disguising garments, has no clothes on, but remains a mass of primitively fundamental, even unconscious, human impulses, woven in and out of each other, as equals, no longer divided into some that may be shown, being respectable, and others that must be concealed, suppressed, or aspersed with contempt, as though they had no right to existence. So the way is opened for a new vision of the soul, a new vision of the world, a new vision even of the human body, what would once have been called a new Gospel of Life. That is still some way ahead. The psychoanalysts are not themselves the people who can bring it. But glimpses were caught of it — as by Whitman — before they even existed.

Every spiritual darkness, they say, is darkest before dawn. It is sad, no doubt, that we of the last two centuries should, beyond all men, have lived in the age in which, above or below all others, the world could not be seen for what it is, and that all our literature and our art, and almost our science, is so choked and disguised in artificial and hypocritical garments that one sometimes wonders whether in future times anyone will ever think it worth looking at. It may seem hard. But what finer stimulus could there be to our courage? One sometimes feels that the substitution of the minor martyrdoms of modern times for the major martyrdoms of older days has not been altogether for the good of humanity. Of old it was from the flames that went up from the bodies of real martyrs burnt at the stake that the dawn was first most clearly seen in the sky.

FEBRUARY 18: 'There are no voices, O Rhodope, which are not soon mute, however tuneful: there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.' I felt that long melodious sigh in my heart when I read in the papers of the death of a man I never met, though I often heard of him. He was known for his fine and useful and quiet work in the world. In my mind his name lingered tenderly because in one of his writings he once passingly described in appreciative happy words a certain beautiful voice and boyish laugh which to me was one of the most familiar dear things in the world. In that man's mind, at all events, I would say to myself, there still rings sympathetically the echo of a voice that may never again be heard. — But there is no voice of which the echo is not still at last.

It is well, I know, that it should be so, and the things that never die are only the things that never lived and never had the ravishing power over us that only belongs to the things that have once had life. If it were not so, life itself would grow intolerable with the memory of all the beauty it once held from creation day onwards and the songs of all the voices that once sang, and we could not live in a world where still for ever that wild music burthened every bough. So let us not too sadly mourn that there is no voice 'of which the echo is not faint at last.'

MARCH 12: When, from amidst the ugly confusion and noise of London, the peaceful corner of Cornwall where I spent the winter comes back to my thoughts, it comes back nearly always in the symbol of a bird. I was told that the missel thrush flourishes there, but my bird I regard as the common thrush, though his song possessed a subtle individuality to which any merely specific name

would be inadequate. Every morning, from the time of my arrival, he would begin to sing from the bough of a tree near my window over the sea, more than half an hour before sunrise, and his song was always the first articulated sound to be heard against the deep rhythmic reverberation of the ocean, for one can scarcely take into consideration the spasmodic occasional cries of the sea-gulls which may or may not arise at any hour of the night as of the day. The sea-gull is a bird for whose alert intelligence and practical energy and initiative I have profound admiration, but he is not an artist in song, scarcely more than the human baby, from whom in the distance he sometimes seems to the ear barely distinguishable; he is an artist in flying and one never wearies of watching him, but his voice is not that of song, but perhaps of rudimentary speech, far from beautiful, but admitting of some inflection and seemingly calculated to be intelligible to other members of the species.

My bird was an artist. He was obviously not attempting to convey information, nor even to express definite emotion, beyond, possibly, the general joy of living. He was only concerned to sing, and into his singing he put what, if he were human, we should be compelled to regard as a high degree of deliberate artistic intelligence. His music was of vocal rather than instrumental type, a poet's music, and it fell, if one listened with due care, into lines and stanzas. He was a master in the use of intervals — the placing of the *cæsura* — though they were short, sometimes only just perceptible. The actual material of his song was of no high quality and it was that that made his art so impressive. He had open, as it were, vowel notes, rather piercing at close range, and he had more consonantal phrases. It was the endless slight variety, and the skilful intervals, within a rather narrow range, which made the song so fascinating, and so completely free from monotony, for one never seemed able to catch quite the same

stanza twice. To my ear the whole song fell into stanzas of five or six lines, with a varying number of phrases, from five or six to one, in a line; but always the same phrases in each line. The first line never had less than three phrases and often more; the penultimate line was usually of two phrases and the last nearly always of one only. Thus each stanza stood out as a whole, but a whole that was delicately and endlessly varied by what seemed to be deliberate art.

So all through the winter my little artist was making his songs with a serenity that was proof against rain and gales. The weather must be bad, indeed, when his song was disturbed. The owl who tu-whooed softly any night on the land side of the house never once came on the sea side which my bird found so congenial, whether it was that the wildness of Nature seemed to him a fitting background for his own subtle art, or that he was exerting by sympathetic magic the power of his hypnotic suggestion on Nature. For it was when the weather grew gentler that his song began to fail. Then it was only for a few moments that at dawn he came to sing one or two stanzas; but they never failed. During the earlier months I had wondered how he could find time for so much singing. With the early Cornish spring he could find time no longer. In this soft air the domestic duties of bird-life perhaps begin early. But until my departure he never failed to sing one or two stanzas at dawn.¹

¹ I was not at this time acquainted with Professor Hoffmann's *Führer durch unsere Vogelwelt*, which is, I suppose, by far the best book on bird-song, and Garstang's little book on *Songs of the Birds* was not yet published. Much that I have written is confirmed by Hoffmann who regards the song-thrush (though with prudent reservation!) as the Mozart or Haydn of the bird-world, while the closely related blackbird is much more modern in his methods, belonging to the same sort of school as, for instance, Debussy.

APRIL 20: Now at last this slow keen March weather is melting into spring and a delicate sunny exhilaration, that is yet sharp, fills the air. To-day, even in a dingy and sordid London suburb, the sun after rain has a clear brightness which almost makes the South seem near. This sun shines in through my window on to the blue Delft pot of tulips, and their flame-coloured globes become so radiant at that tender touch, so full of serene enchanting life, that, instead of meditating on the Art of Life as I had set out to do, I can only lean back and gaze at them, to inhale the atmosphere of their beauty, until I begin to feel that my eyes may soon fill with happy tears, for these tulips are linked in memory with bowls of tulips from which I drank loveliness before, in what different condition, in what remote years.

So I wander into the streets, to feel the sun, and to note how unfamiliarly and how southerly white the pavements have grown beneath it, and the streets themselves and all they contain have blossomed into gay colour, women and men and children scattered among the street stalls, buying vegetables and fruits and little pots of flowers, for, after all, these people who sometimes seem so alien to me are feeling precisely the same emotions that I feel. There comes back to me the memory of other market-scenes in other parts of the world, there flashes on me the vision of the little Mallorcan market square of Palma as it was at this midday hour, as it may be at this moment, deserted, indeed, with the stalls still there, and the girl who slept alone amid her market goods with limbs flung apart in the heat. 'To travel is to die continually': I know it well, but such death is the portal of eternal life, and by it we enter the tradition of the world and garner up our own treasure-house of beauty.

The world, if we like to view it so, is fundamentally a very ugly place. If you like (of course you need not like) it is fundamentally — physically, metaphysically, spiritually,

morally, socially, individually — as bad as possible. But there is this about it. By facing this ugly world, by ranging wide enough in it, afar, and above, and below — in Nature or in one's fellows or in oneself — one can find beauty. Slowly, patiently, with the exercise of much skill, one can divine beauty in it, one can reveal beauty, one can transmute it into beauty, one can even create beauty. The number of points at which one has been able to do this is the measure of one's success in living.

So, after all, I have not wandered from the subject of my meditation. This is the Art of Life.

MAY 24: As one's experience of life deepens, new aspects of it, that one scarcely glimpsed before, are always coming into clearer view. One such aspect, often impressed on me in recent years, is the closeness of the relationship between religion and love. I have long known it as a general fact — though I knew also that it is far from being the only fact to note when one speaks of religion — but now I seem to see part of the mechanism of it.

What we love and venerate always lives and can never die until we die. The mummied sacred cats of the ancient Egyptians, as Flinders Petrie finds them to-day, had little bowls of milk before them. It may have been merely a symbol, but of a real fact of personal faith which may have gone far, far back into Palæolithic times.

It is not only that what we love lives; it also grows. And as it grows, it sheds all those elements that were accidental and not of its essence. So that when the object of love is no longer felt by the physical senses, but by the spiritual senses alone — that is to say, when it has entered the sphere of religion — it is for the first time truly felt. It is common for the 'cynic' — as he is foolishly and ignorantly called — to comment on the

devotion of the husband to the dead wife who seemed to make his life wretched or the worship of the mother for the son who had wounded her by careless indifference. There is ample room for psychological comment on such pitiful persons. Yet they are nearer to the truth of life than their critic. An element of pain is essential to life; and of love, supremely, pain is in the very texture. There is no need to invoke any morbid algolagnia to explain this. It is normal. 'On n'aime que les choses et les gens qui vous font souffrir,' wrote Flaubert profoundly to his friend, Mademoiselle Leroyer de Chantepie. We need not carry that truth beyond the normal limit, like Proust, who, applying to it the last refinements of elaborate analysis, would even make it appear that the whole content of love is suffering. I find it hard to conceive any love worth the name, any love, that is, with some power of permanence, that has not sometimes been experienced as anguish. Yet even though anguish may be essential in creating the permanence of love, it is not under the form of Pain but of Joy that love assumes its immortal shape. So that however pitifully some have expressed this truth, we must still recognise that it remains truth. One is not least often deluded when one thinks one is detecting delusion.

I have always been apt to see that it is a mistake to regard love, except in its earliest and most youthful manifestations, as an illusion. In a notable and penetrating passage Proust has contrasted Saint-Loup's adoration for his commonplace mistress with his own clear-sighted vision of her, and we need not contest the reality of the contrast. Yet it remains true that there is none so clear-sighted as the lover who has passed through that early stage, and to that truth also Proust has borne witness. The lover is the most clairvoyant of beings. A thing that is loved is, in the long run, to no eye so clearly revealed in all its appalling defects as to the thing that absolutely loves it. The lover has the best guarantee of the fidelity of his

vision. If he has seen there what ravishes him, he has also seen there what tortures him. No doubt a large part of the fascination and the piquancy of love lies in this fantastic association, in one little person, of such a wild variety of qualities to worship and defects to damn.

It is by a continuation of this process — and so again no illusion — that we reach religion. One may smile, and it is reasonable to smile, at Comte's divinisation after her death of Clotilde de Vaux, who had scarcely been more than an acquaintance to him, at the most a rarely seen affectionate friend. It was a rather morbidly imaginative brain here at work. But, at all events, if we can scarcely count this a reality, Comte has furnished us with a nearly complete symbol of reality. It is but a farther step on the path of love. In memory the mind makes an instinctive unconscious selection from among the traits of the most loved one, and the essential remains, the unessential falls away. The figure is carved afresh in large and simple outlines. It is not less truly seen, it is more truly seen, in that the roughness of surface, once so painful to contact, can no more be perceived or felt.

That is the path that ends in religion, and it is the path that Man may well have been treading ever since Palæolithic days.

JUNE 1: This is what used to be called the 'Glorious First of June,' I forget for the moment why, but I am sure it had something to do with fighting; there is nothing glorious in the mob's eyes but what has to do with fighting, *miles gloriosus* in a perverted sense. I am reminded of the day because I am again shocked, as of late I have so often had occasion to be, by the attitude of the generation of 1914 towards this 'glorious' phenomenon. Again and again in our most esteemed popular journals I come upon slighting allusions to war — evidently aimed at the 'Great War' — thrown out with a fine careless contempt for anything military.

Now, I ask myself, where were these people in 1914? I never heard of them. No one seems ever to have heard of them. They are too numerous to have all been hidden away in the deathly silence of some remote trenches of Peace. One cannot avoid the conclusion that they were themselves fighting, or kicking other people into the fighting line, or wildly rushing to the rear in search of 'war work,' and shouting patriotic songs and wagging national flags and writing to the papers — for I speak of writers, be it noted — to stimulate all the force of hate, to extol — no doubt often in innocent simple-minded credulity — the men on their own side, whichever that may have been, as heroes, and the men on the other as dealers in 'atrocities.'

I have nothing to object. It has gone on for some thousands of years, possibly longer. It is what we have come to call 'human nature.' I only observe, mildly, that it might have been done a little less hysterically, a little more temperately; for even in the prolonged wars between England and France not much more than a century ago, the English and French people were still free to be friends, to admire each other, to visit each other's lands, and to leave to the military and political castes of their lands the business, or the pleasure, of fighting and making to fight, while long before that it was a famous English poet who sang of the 'sweet enemy.'

But what I do object to is that these creatures have been false to themselves. 'Human nature,' if you like, but if human nature is to be bestial nature, let it at all events be that of decent beasts. Why need the generation of 1914 proclaim to the world that their minds are moulded of such soft pap? It would be better to continue the march to hell like men. It is enough to have been traitors to all that is great and noble in Man. There is really no occasion to be renegades also from their own miserable selves.

JUNE 8: It seemed to me that Man, who in the Neolithic Age had discovered the uses of Corn and begun to make Bread, had not at first divined all the Eleusinian significance of that Mystery, but had in a later age sent Keats to the Earth in order to show that in the delight of the sensory physical things of the world is also to be found an exalted imaginative quality of the spirit, standing in the mere corn-field, a Ruth to announce higher things.

Then I awoke, in the middle of the night, just able to catch that receding dream, yet with a sense of blissful satisfaction, the feeling, it seemed, of joy that the possibilities of life were so much larger than I had supposed, and that Man was thus able to remain in direct touch with his children of genius so late.

I had just arrived to spend a few days by the sea; I had slipped, as I am often wont, a volume of Keats's *Letters* into my bag; and my landlady had mentioned that on the morrow there would be no bread, as the bakers were having a special celebration of their own. That sufficed to bring Keats's Ode into contact with recent thoughts of Eleusis, though the devout Freudian, no doubt, must needs feel that the plastic hand of a divine Libido was here at work.

JUNE 16: I never grow weary now of leaning over the fascinating edge of this Margate that I have learnt so late to relish. I often try to explain its complex fascination. True, Bergson would say that the more I try to explain, the farther away I am from 'intuiting' the fact. Yet I cannot see why I may not be allowed to do both, though, I quite see why, not both at the same moment. But to-day I am too lazy to explain; I am content to 'intuit' the scene of this crowd staged on the sands, of which I might perhaps be supposed the least congenial of spectators, this crowd of miscellaneous people

who are occupied in raising mountains of sand, or playing at ball, or paddling in the dirty sea-water, or publicly cuddling their best girls, or reading the *Daily Mail* or licking twopenny ice-cornets — doing, indeed, all the things I would never do unless I were a good Catholic performing a penance — and perhaps scarcely one in a thousand of them aware that the background of this scene, the stretch of this coast and the coast opposite, is at rare moments of a loveliness so exquisite that Dutchmen and East Anglians have for three centuries spent their lives in struggling to grasp it in their hands, this vast crowd unconsciously making for that background a radiant and variegated foreground on the yellow sands which, for one spectator at all events, when the ocean is calm and the sun shines, becomes a spectacle of unending exhilaration.

JUNE 24: I was reading the other day the narrative of the scientific man who spent the winter in a little Antarctic island among penguins. He found that there are among them, as among human beings, some of all sorts, even some of an anti-social — what we call ‘criminal’ — kind, who lived apart from the others. And husbands and wives were much like what they are in the human species, some jealous or engaged in repelling the advance of outside illegitimate lovers, and many husbands dominating their wives, and some wives dominating their husbands.

But the point that interests me was their attitude towards the intruding human stranger (who was already occupied in the characteristically human task of slaughtering them by the hundred to serve as food in hard times to come, though, as it turned out, their flesh became bad before the time to eat it arrived). Some of them, surely by a sound instinct or a true insight, were hostile and aggressive towards the unknown human animal. But others were friendly and affable.

The Hebrew poet-prophet looked forward to the time when the wolf should dwell with the lamb. That aspiration — not too extravagantly formulated when we remember that the wolf's near relative, the sheep-dog, has long dwelt with the lamb and even become its guardian — might well be regarded as a racial memory of the time when in the early Palæolithic Garden of Eden — before Man had become quite so free as our scientific Antarctic friend in killing creatures who after all would prove uneatable — a large proportion of every animal species which had no reason to treat Man as its prey must really have regarded him in a friendly and affable spirit. It is obvious that by an inevitable process of natural selection, in the measure that Man himself became more predaceous, those strains in every species of animal which were friendly and affable would be gradually killed out, and so all animals become as hostile and suspicious towards Man as we actually find them to be.

Yet the friendly and affable impulse must still be latent in animals (I notice that, already at Kew, even the ordinary wild English birds, having somehow discovered the rules and regulations of the Gardens, are unusually friendly), and it is not impossible that if Man's attitude towards them changes it may emerge afresh. So Isaiah's prophecy would be in some measure realised and we should regain, in some degree, the early Palæolithic Garden of Eden on Earth. Only by that time, with the present devastating fury of Man, how many natural animals will be left?

JULY 4: I went to the Tate Gallery to-day to see the show of Cotman's pictures before it closes. It was a 'shilling admission' day, I found, and though I am privileged to escape that unjust tax, I am always indignant that it should be imposed at the door of a Gallery which is supposed to be

'National' — for if we must have Nationalism let us have not only its vices but a few of its virtues — so I marched in through the East door with tempered triumph. Of course that toll achieves an end, and there was scarcely anyone there, so that as I passed slowly through the first room and lingered lovingly over a delicious Hogarth I was able to note a well-set-up white-haired old man with a bronzed handsome face in light tweed knickerbocker suit, carrying his travelling cap in his hand. As I still lingered over the Hogarth he passed near me and inquired if I could tell him where the Cotman room was. I replied that I also was on the way to it and felt sure it could not be missed. He evidently desired society and pointing to another Hogarth, a portrait, he said: 'Very fine — but not equal to Sir Joshua.' I have heard of people who can only refer to Reynolds with a veneration half familiar, half religious, as 'Sir Joshua,' but I had imagined they lived a century ago at least. I was so delighted that, instead of mischievously alluding to Augustus John as 'Sir Joshua's' latter-day descendant, which otherwise I might have been inclined to do, I momentarily forgot my own general, though qualified, antipathy to Reynolds and meekly agreed. That sufficed to attach to me my new friend and to make me his compliant victim for the rest of my visit. He soon mentioned that he 'painted a little' himself; that had not quite accorded with my impression of his military air, and a little later he referred to 'the time when I was in the Army' and so justified my impression. But evidently he was an artist at heart; as we compared our impressions of the Cotman water-colours his taste seemed fine to me, which is of course an altruistic way of saying that it accorded with my own. But, somehow, all the time I seemed to be talking with a man who lived in the remote past, just as, when I meet Mr. Walter Sickert, I seem, for all his vigorous and youthful modernity, to be taken back beyond living memory. It was hard to believe that, reckoned in mere years, this man

could not be so enormously older than I am myself. He talked of the eighteenth-century engravings he had collected fifty years ago, of the artists of old time he had known, of his grandfather's judgment in pictures. To the things which I would have said most conspicuously belonged to 'my time' in art he never once referred. I began to think that this must be a Rip Van Winkle of the past, evoked for my delectation — so many beautiful things happen to me — and that idea was mightily strengthened when my companion quietly produced an ancient snuff-box and inhaled a pinch with the fine gesture of the old world. Then he drew forth a bandanna handkerchief which also, rightly or wrongly, I have always associated with the same antique ages. Perhaps his knickerbockers, which were a little out of place in the Tate Gallery, should really be regarded as knee-breeches, such as I have been told my own great-grandfather wore, and I too possess my ancestors' snuff-boxes though I have never been tempted to make practical use of them. I seemed to begin to understand why my companion had vaguely remarked that he had 'been away a long time.' But that illuminating explanation of the situation was dashed when I heard: 'As I used to say to the Tommies in France' — for there were no 'Tommies' until a considerable time after Uncle Toby fought in Flanders. Yet, on the whole, as I listened to Colonel Van Winkle, I could not help feeling that I might be talking with my own grandfather who died before I was born. So it was satisfactory to find how thoroughly I could agree with him. I am sometimes called 'modern,' and there is nothing that I less desire to be called. The only modern things that I care for are those that are as old as the dawn or the rainbow or at least as the wild rose. The things that are commonly called 'modern' to-day are the things that will be old-fashioned to-morrow, and if we live among eternal things there is nothing old-fashioned nor anything modern. So it was gratifying to me to find that my new

acquaintance, who spoke as it seemed to me my great-grandfather might have spoken, put forth opinions that singularly corresponded to my own. He remarked that in old days life was a beautiful art; he pointed out the finely made earthenware depicted in the works before us; he described how beautifully in his own early days a wheel-barrow was still made. Then, starting from I recall not what, he began, without using the word, to talk eugenics. So it seemed clearer than ever that this solid-looking spectre out of the past had been embodied for my momentary gratification and would melt away as soon as I was gone. But whether that was so I shall never know. Time passed, I had to leave. He bowed in courtly way. I lifted my hat and departed.

JULY 8: 'The ideal of love, the ideal that it is better to give than to receive — ... all the lot—all the whole beehive of ideals — has got the modern bee disease, and gone putrid, stinking.' It is not strange to see statements of this kind; they look familiar and one may pass them calmly. But it is perhaps strange that a man who is so anxious to get to the heart of things as Mr. D. H. Lawrence should be so befooled by the clang of words as to set the statement solemnly down.

'It is better to give than to receive.' That is an ancient Oriental saying that has come down to us on what used to be thought good authority, and, as a matter of fact, it is profoundly true. It is put into the Oriental form, but one needs little intelligence to discern that the Orientals love to make statements thus profoundly true in the form of paradox. In our more psychologically analytic way of stating the same truth, to give is better than to receive simply because giving is the most massive and deeply satisfying way of receiving.

Yesterday evening I gave a beautiful peach to a dear woman who, it appears, likes peaches but never feels that she is

entitled to bestow such a luxury upon herself. It happens that I am indifferent to peaches. Yet if I were not, her delight in that fruit tasted far more delicious to me than even my own could. It was better to give than to receive because in giving I received far more than I gave. I do not know whether in my place Mr. Lawrence would have turned away with a woe-begone countenance muttering to himself: 'Bang goes sax-pence!' But if there is any meaning in his outburst that is clearly what he ought to do. The same relationship exists even in what some consider the most egoistic of all impulses, that of sex. Twenty-three centuries ago, when it is commonly said that what we call love between men and women had not yet been discovered, Aristophanes was able to write in his *Lysistrata* that 'there is no pleasure for a man unless the woman shares it.' Even in this egoistic matter it is not only better to give than to receive, but one receives nothing unless one gives. If that is true in the most fundamental of natural relationships it is hard to see how there can be any relationship in which it is not true.

It sometimes seems to me that there are certain great elementary test sayings which if a man cannot make his own he is an alien in the world and a rebel from Nature, fated to be a disconsolate outcast from life. Of these shibboleths which only the children of Heaven, that is to say the children of Nature can utter, one is certainly this: It is more blessed to give than to receive.

JULY 25: As, absorbed in my own occupation, my eye chanced to sweep across my window just now, it caught in passing the sensation of a small tree opposite, on the upper reflecting surface of whose leaves a pale London sun was shining, and that sensation appeared to mental perception as it were the lovely image of a pear-tree in blossom, such as had

joyously flashed on me a few months ago in the garden of a friend at Saffron Walden. At once and with no sense of transition that perception passed on into the thought: Why do we say that the dead die?

It was a great moment in human history when some deeply divining poet of old time — it may well have been as old as Palæolithic time — first became deliberately aware that it is only in so far as it has been planted and rooted within our own minds that anything in the world can in any significant sense be said to live, so that what happens to it in the external world is henceforth of no account. That was such a surprising and overwhelming discovery that one can well believe he went on to imagine that, if life were really so unlike what it seemed to be, the people he knew might well themselves be alive in some spiritual shape even after they were in all appearance dead. That corollary, however, leaves unaffected the great fundamental fact.

So I linger lovingly over the ever-living symbolic pear-tree that blossoms immortally in my mind.

AUGUST 4: To-day I am reading Taine's *Voyage aux Pyrénées* to attune my mind beforehand to that region. It is the most amusing book of Taine's I have ever read; I never knew he could write with such fun and spirit. It is true he was young then; he was not yet the grey absorbed scholarly recluse I once caught a glimpse of, with the atmosphere of the study still clinging to him even in a lively Parisian salon.

It may seem strange to add that I find Taine most amusing in this book when dealing with the Gascons of old times and when he is concerned with warfare. They had a genius for bloodshed, these Béarnais of Gascony — which constituted so important a part of the English Empire — and their neigh-

bours the Basques were their worthy fellows. They fought and they danced with the same zest and almost at the same moment. They knew how to make death a jest and a battle a buffoonery.

This is brought out in one admirable chapter of the book. The rain came down at Bayonne and the inn was insufferable and Taine sought the Public Library, which was closed, but the Librarian had pity on the eminent scholar, who set out to study what he calls a mediæval pastoral, the joyful history of Pé de Puyane. That ancient Gascon hero was an admiral and Mayor of Bayonne in the days that Froissart chronicled. He had red banners flying from his galleys to signify death without mercy, and he thought as little of killing a man as of lifting his hat. He fought much against the Normans and once hanged seventy of them in his yard beside his dogs, and again at the battle of Sluys he captured two French admirals, strangling one and cutting the other's throat, for it would be stupid and dull not to vary the act of killing. But the neighbouring Basques were his best-beloved foes. It occurred to Pé de Puyane that as the lordship of Bayonne possessed the sovereignty of the sea — for he seems to have been a pioneer of the doctrine that 'Britannia rules the waves' — then Bayonne was entitled to levy a tax on all places on the seacoast. Everyone at Bayonne agreed that nothing could be more equitable. But the Basques laughed scornfully and killed the would-be tax gatherers. Pé de Puyane said nothing, but his face was terrible to see. At last there came a day when the Basques were gathered together to dance and feast. Then Pé's eyes shone like those of a youth who sees his bride approach. He swooped down on the scene of merriment, followed by a faithful band, and with the axes of their sharp-pointed pikes they struck down the Basques, or spitted them on the points, at the Mayor of Bayonne's command, until you could see daylight through some of them. (One recalls that it was at Bayonne

the first bayonet was made.) At last only five were left alive and these, out of friendliness, the Mayor fastened to the arches of the bridge at low tide, so that they might not be drowned should the tide fail to rise. So were all destroyed, to the great joy of the whole city, which applauded the spectacle. As I read I remember how, last year, at the Castle of Amboise, when the guide evoked the fantastic vision of hundreds of Huguenot corpses dangling from windows and balconies, I surprised on the face of the sweet little friend by my side — an ardent pacifist too, and sympathetic to Huguenots — instead of the expression proper to the occasion, a merry twinkling smile, and now I understand that a bubble of the old Gascon blood I know runs in her veins had risen to the surface. Pé de Puyane's triumph, however, was short-lived. Attack was followed by counter-attack, and in the end the victorious Basques imposed a peace from which Pé and his family were specifically excluded. So he took refuge in the house of his good friend the Prince of Wales at Bordeaux. But one day, when he sallied forth to visit a vineyard he had bought, a knife a fathom long was thrust into his armpit, between the joints of his armour, as he was lifting a huge bunch of grapes. So he died. His son Hugues thereupon set sail for England, where Edward III, remembering the glorious deeds of his father, received him gladly and knighted him, and he became the father of a large family which have done their best to preserve among us the great tradition of what we nowadays call 'militarism.'

It was an altogether undesigned coincidence. But I now find I could not have been more appropriately occupied to-day than in reading the history of Pé de Puyane. For now, as I glance through to-day's *Times*, I find that it is the anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War and that joyful event has to be celebrated. But nowadays we no longer sing in the glad Gascon fashion:

'Belle fête aux gens de Bayonne,
Aux Basques grillades de cochons.'

We no longer make the welkin ring with the noise of trumpets and cornets and drums, and a battle has ceased to be a scene of revelry. In our degenerate age war has even become an anachronism, and so we seek to sanctify our buffoonery. When the latest descendant of Pé de Puyane is set to write a leader on 'August the Fourth' we feel that a good man is struggling with adversity. 'Too august a day,' he writes, 'for us to permit ourselves to dwell solely upon afflictions and embarrassments.' How chilly that would have seemed to Pé! 'Security is not the best builder of character; our youth lived dangerously in the year of war.' There is a challenge to the Ten Commandments there which might have appealed to Pé. 'The historical comfort of a righteous cause.' — He might have sniffed at that. It is a creditable performance. But give me Pé de Puyane.

AUGUST 18: It seems that I am not to outgrow my old love of Paris, though there are so many reasons why I might well have outgrown it, and for a long time I thought I had. After all, it has been woven for forty years too familiarly into my life ever to become indifferent, and too intimately ever to cease to be poignant. Among so conservative a people, in a city that changes so little, there is every chance for the conservation of memories. I see them still, curious or familiar, flowering delicately at almost every step, and at any turn I may find myself treading, with a sudden tender gasp, on my own heart.

There are more impersonal grounds why Paris should seem interesting and delightful. At some parts of the earth my attention has been held in perpetual fascination because I seem to have been dropped into another world. But Paris is not another world. It is the same world, of the same nature, the same kind of people doing the same kind of things. Yet in

every detail there is minute variation, an infinite series of minute variations. So that everything I see is familiar, I understand everything without need of explanation, and yet it is always deliciously novel. And the novelty is always a closer approximation to art than I am used to in England. It may, I admit, be bad as well as good art. But even the mere presence of that consciousness of art I find something. For however intensely English I may be in ancestry and temper, I rebel against the English repulsion for the conception of life as an art. Perhaps indeed one might say that it is only by being intensely English that one can love Paris, just as it is only by being superficially English that one would ever feel called upon to characterise Paris absurdly as 'the gay city.' It is because it is so poignant, because of its perpetual instinctive approximation towards the standpoint of art, that I find Paris exhilarating and that its rhythm suits me. — Even my watch, which in London this morning was three minutes fast, is here, by the Luxembourg clock, I find, exactly right.¹

AUGUST 19: 'Can you tell me why that is so wonderful?' An English girl, of the modern sort, determined not to take anything on trust, asked the question as she sat down beside me on one of the red-cushioned benches of the Salle de la Vénus de Milo. She was not, fortunately, addressing me but her girl companion, who wisely made no direct reply but proceeded to read out the orthodox statements in her guide-book. I am not sure that they proved convincing.

I was pleased the sceptical question was not addressed to me, not only because I am aware that the intuition of beauty must arise spontaneously and that my explanations could scarcely supply its place, but also because I was myself in a state of

¹ But the Luxembourg clock, I found later, was wrong!

feeling rather sympathetic to that which prompted the question.

It is forty years since I first sat on this bench — re-covered since then though with the same traditional red plush — the memory fresh in my mind of how Heine, yet forty years earlier, before finally taking to his mattress-grave had also sat before this figure, 'Our Lady of Beauty who has no arms to help us.' Some twenty years after I first saw it a photograph of the Venus of Milo was still hanging near me as I worked. I have long ceased to feel its inspiration. If I sought inspiration nowadays in any Greek statuary, it would, I suppose, be in the more archaic, especially perhaps the more variously intimate, the less conventionally divine figures, such as the Demeter and Kore of the Athens Museum.

It is strange when one thinks of it — as I often have thought — how æsthetic appreciation moves backwards in time and not forwards, more towards what seems to us the archaic, though in reality it may be far indeed from the beginning. A century ago the Venus de' Medici was a goddess to whose sacred shrine more pilgrims travelled than to any Madonna of art. Leigh Hunt, though he had no special knowledge of sculpture, really possessed as fine an æsthetic perception as any man of his time in England, and in the delightful *Autobiography* I well remember reading in youth, he confessed his disappointment when at last he stood before that Venus in Florence; but he admitted that he was the only visitor there who ever had been disappointed, except Hazlitt and Smollett, and he was not altogether pleased to be on the side of the splotic Smollett. He was evidently a little ashamed of his disappointment, for he devoted many pages to the goddess, and was glad to be able to admire her flanks, the 'hips and sides' in his modest phrase. But, when I in my turn nearly forty years after Leigh Hunt wrote his *Autobiography* came for the first time to Florence, I had grown up in an atmosphere in which

this statue seemed merely the elegant degradation of a far away older, more beautiful type, so that I felt no disappointment, only indifference, even a little amusement.

We are now again, almost without knowing it, at the turn of a new shifting of taste, and but a few years ago, Guy Dickins, whose knowledge and judgment were alike of the finest quality, set forth clearly — and to my great satisfaction at all events — the reasons which justify us in regarding the Melian Aphrodite as, though indeed still a beautiful work, occupying a somewhat undeserved position, being the Hellenistic second century B.C. copy of an earlier more intelligible type, here awkwardly modified into a motiveless pose.

It would seem that as we become more civilised, as our æsthetic feeling becomes more sensitive, we are ever more and more repelled by the efflorescence of decadence, ever more drawn by an earlier beauty. (There is of course always also the concomitant opposite attraction, since one cannot have any action without reaction.) Nothing seems to me nowadays more attractive in Greek sculpture than the Ionian Korai of the Acropolis, while there are some who would push back the attraction of the primitive to savagery, and admire the crudest beginnings of art.

That is why I am pleased that I am not called upon to explain to the girl by my side why the Venus of Milo is 'so wonderful.'

AUGUST 21: We had climbed up to Montmartre to gaze down at the great city below, this fairly clear afternoon, and on the walk down I was drawn by an old association of the spot to seek once more, as on my first visit to Paris, the grave of the best-loved poet, after Shelley, of my youth. It was forty years ago but I still recalled the right turn and soon we came across the *gardien* who, it turned out, was on

his way, watering pot in hand, to the tomb we sought. It was no longer the plain slab I had seen of old; a meaningless pile of marble had been placed there, so that the old poignant simplicity had gone and no beauty came in its place. But there was a wreath of fresh flowers lying there, and the *gardien*, who remarked that many people come to visit this grave, evidently found it worth his while to keep them sprinkled with water.

The pompous funereal monuments of Rochefort, of Labiche, of all the rest, who played their noisy and ostentatious parts on the world's stage, stand around in this crowded cemetery, dusty and melancholy now, deserted of all men. Over the ashes alone of this dreamer—who knew how to turn to immortal music the desire and the laughter of human hearts which smile at their own desires and their own laughter—they still scatter the fragrant offering of flowers and tears.

AUGUST 31: The station is only a *halte*, and so brief a halt, with no sign of its existence save one shrill delayed cry of the woman in charge of it, that the train is already moving on again before we have both descended, no one else alighting here. A little country walk of three kilometres lies ahead, and we cross the bridge over the Garonne, no great river up here, along a road bordered by large walnut-trees, and apple-trees laden with the deep red fruit Cézanne loved to paint. Before long we see ahead the hill which is our goal, with its walled ramparts and the Cathedral Church that crowns its summit. Before we reach it we pass a little village, behind which is the church of Saint Just, dating in its present rough and massive shape from the ninth century, when it had already been for a couple of centuries the temporary cathedral of a diocese which has long ceased

to exist, and it is still a parish church. Another kilometre, and we have reached the ancient city on the hill. At its foot is a small group of comparatively modern houses built in the Pyrenean manner of this district, with two limbs enclosing a rectangular space which usually faces south. The site is Roman, and a few years ago one of these proprietors found on his land the Gallo-Roman theatre and beautiful mosaics of the ancient city which was destroyed in the fourth century. The war came and these remains were covered up; since then the owner's wife has died and now he refuses to allow anything to be touched. We climb the winding road upwards, pause in the little old Belvidere to gaze on the outstretched view, and enter the city by its chief gate, beside the sixteenth-century house, the finest in the place, which was sometime the episcopal palace.

Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, situated on an isolated rock and described in the guide-book as one of the most bizarre places in France, is now only a great village with a few hundred inhabitants. But for six or seven centuries it was the cathedral city of a vast diocese broken up at the Revolution and divided among the neighbouring dioceses of France and Spain. Its patron saint seems to have been a really remarkable person, and the present *Curé Doyen* — that title seems the only touch of ecclesiastical distinction now clinging to the place — has written his life at length in a scholarly spirit, however sprinkled with miracles he admits to be dubious. Bertrand de l'Isle was born in the eleventh century near Toulouse, a Count's son and related on both sides to some of the noblest and gallantest ruling families of the time, while his mother was very pious. He was bred, according to the fashion of the time, partly in a monastery, partly in the courts of princes, for in the politico-ecclesiastical turbulence of that period a young nobleman must be able to be either a knight on the field or a bishop in the cathedral, and the two spheres

of action were not indeed widely different. Bertrand shone in both, on the field, probably against the Saracens who were constantly devastating the Pyrenees from Spain. But while still in 'the flower of his age' he abandoned the world to become one of the canons, there under a strict Augustinian rule, of Toulouse, and not long after, so great had his fame become as archdeacon of Toulouse, he was elected as their bishop by the chapter of the city to which he was to give his name. He soon set about to rebuild the cathedral on its ancient and original Gallo-Roman site on the top of the hill, in the Romanesque manner of the time, and later it was completed in the Gothic manner.

Bertrand de l'Isle was more than a great architect, more than a great apostle, he was also a great ruler and amply lived up to his quality as Count of the City. He forwarded its material as well as its spiritual prosperity, although in the end it has turned out that the spiritual life of the hill has long outlived its material vigour. Bertrand was speedily canonised, and, living and dead, his record is crowded with miracles, but it is clear that here was a great man who needed neither canonisation nor miracles to prove his claim to human reverence.

When we remember all that this spiritual hill-fortress has passed through it is surprising to find how much there is left. Constant wars, much looting, destructive fires, the ravages of the Huguenots, the poverty which compelled the sale of valuables, the hard hand of the Revolution, the claims of Museums — and yet Saint Bertrand-de-Comminges is crowded with precious things, the richest archæological treasury of the Pyrenees. To me no part of the church is so attractive as the cloisters, the home of the canonry Saint Bertrand had set up under that Augustinian rule he had learned to know at Toulouse, and still, though of various dates, in part of his time. It has been much dilapidated and the upper

story removed, yet its peaceful charm remains as well as its archæological interest, for it is more in the Spanish manner than any cloisters I recall in France, which is indeed natural since Spain is here so near and Saint Bertrand's dearest friend and helper was a son of the King of Aragon.

The outstanding feature of all, however, is the sixteenth-century wood-carving of the great organ in the north-west angle of the nave, with a pulpit woven around one of its pillars, and especially the woodwork of the choir. Here we see in superb untrammelled vigour the spirit of the Middle Ages — imaginative and pious and grotesque and innocently obscene — carried on into the Renaissance and expressing itself magnificently in all the new artistic power of that time. We must be endlessly grateful to Jean de Mauléon, the Bishop to whose initiative all this carving is due.

The cathedral is of a piece with the town in its general air of peaceful contented well-kept desolation, a little reminding one of Malta's Citta Vecchia, that other ancient inland capital on a height, larger indeed and more imposing, this better set in a vastly more magnificent framework of mountains and villages. I note as a mark of the place the semi-circular tympana on the door-ways of any pretension, of white marble with varied designs in relief.

One speaks of Saint Bertrand as deserted, but at this season of the year an important qualification must be made. A stream of people descending from their various vehicles flows into the church during many hours of the day. These people, a few of them tourists, most of them pilgrims, do not linger; they descend from their vehicles, they march into the church, they are conducted around the choir, by the lady who seems to be the *curé's* sister, or else by her servant, and in the afternoon the gentle sympathetic *curé* is himself posted in the sacristy to point out the sandals which the saint is said to have worn, and his huge gloves, and his ivory crozier, reported to

be made of a single unicorn's horn; and then pilgrims and tourists march out and mount their vehicles and are swiftly borne back again to Lourdes or Luchon or whatever centre may be their temporary home. Not one of them lingers to inhale the delicate antique atmosphere of this rare spot, for nowadays religion and pleasure alike must be taken in a businesslike spirit, at the highest speed, and whether in that process the essence of either of them is lost seems a matter of no concern. The swift procession begins at ten in the morning, about which time the bronchitic old lady on the left of the western portal is setting up her little barrack of postcards and photographs, and the younger woman on the right her sweetmeat stall. Long before dusk the last visitor has come and gone, and we each heave an agreeable sigh.

For the rest we may enjoy our hotel — the only hotel at Saint Bertrand — in peace. It is a long rambling old building facing the west end of the cathedral and close to the town fountain, while at the back is a terrace, on the adjacent ancient wall of the town, superbly overlooking luxuriant slopes of wooded heights and distant mountains. I amuse myself with imagining that before it became the hotel of Saint-Bertrand it was the town residence of the last eighteenth-century Bishop and that this spacious and pleasant bedroom was his, with its bed canopied in the manner shown in the illustrations to the stories of the younger Crébillon and the little holy water stoup by my side figuring Christ and the woman of Samaria by the well, and the wallpaper so ancient in pattern, though well preserved, that the old landlady knows nothing of its origin. It is a pleasant place to spend a few days in, and pleasant to dine on the terrace while the dusk slowly draws a veil over the Garonne valley and the jagged height of Gar, and the sound of the threshing of the beans below grows still, and another dream of calm and joyous beauty is woven into our memories.

SEPTEMBER 22: 'Did you ever hear of So-and-So?' It is a question now and then directed to me and sometimes I have heard of So-and-So. The question may even give me a little touch of pain, for I may not only have felt a vivid interest in So-and-So, but come personally in contact with a noble and attractive personality whose name was once familiar in the world, and is now, a few years later — as this question implies — scarcely to be discerned at all in the deep abyss of the past.

The callous brutality of those who would cover the world, and are indeed now covering it, beneath a vast squirming mass of humanity, indistinguishable and unintelligible, is offensive from many points of view. But I often think pitiously of it in this especial respect that so many noble and beautiful persons are thereby swiftly lost in the mass who might well have been preserved, lovely and fragrant in men's minds, and not be dropped and forgotten like impersonal things, like yesterday's sunset or the roses of which we neglect to collect and preserve even the perfumed petals.

While meekly awaiting another Jehovah with his purifying Flood, and another eugenic Ark, I gaze sadly at all the eager and aspiring young people of the present youthful generation, so hopeful of making a name in the world, or, in the absence of that hope, so worthy to make it, and I think how, in a few years they, too, will swiftly drop out of men's minds in an over-crowded world and become merely So-and-So. — 'Have you ever heard of So-and-So?'

OCTOBER 10: A friend tells me with amusement that on going to his dentist he was greeted with the remark: 'I saw you in the street the other day and thought how well you were looking: "My teeth!" I said to myself.' My friend attributed his well-being to quite other causes.

Yet it is evident we must all view the universe from an ego-centric standpoint and emphasise our own part in its reverberations. If my friend had walked a little further he might have met his butcher who would perhaps have chuckled to himself: 'My meat!' Yet further, and there would be his publisher (for my friend is an author) pensively ejaculating: 'My cheques!' And in the distance his best girl might catch a glimpse of him and shyly murmur to herself: 'My kisses!'

And perhaps, after all, each one of them would be right.

NOVEMBER 1: Men of genius — and still less women of genius — should never be regarded as 'great moral teachers.' Morality, as I have sometimes tried to explain, means the manners and customs, with the corresponding ways of feeling and thinking, of the majority of a community at any given time and place. That definition alone suffices to exclude genius, for genius cannot belong to the majority. By the failure to realise this inevitable and even elementary fact we prepare unpleasant surprises for ourselves and also make the path of genius still harder than, even at the best, it is bound to be.

In recent years Tolstoy has furnished the most conspicuous example of this truth. He was, in fiction at all events, the greatest genius of his time, one of the world's supreme manifestations of genius. He sought also to impress the world, not only in philosophy and in religion, but in morals. Yet he had neither the genius for intellect nor the genius for conduct to enable him to pass beyond mediocrity in any of these fields; he remained a supreme artist. His lamentable passing from life, of which the precise circumstances have been published this year, furnished to such a temperament in such an environment the naturally inevitable end.

Morality, being an attribute of the majority, cannot be

perfectly exhibited by one who in his essence is not of the majority. He may, by virtue of insight, be a pioneer of a superior morality, which may, or may not, become that of a later majority; his own attempt to live it adequately can only be a tragic disaster, as we see typically represented in the story of Jesus. Lao-tze and Buddha and Jesus were of superior genius in religion, but if mankind had accepted them as moral leaders society would speedily have been dissolved. So, among women, Sappho and St. Theresa and George Eliot are worthy of all reverence for their achievements in art or in religion, but as exquisite emanations of the moral life they have doubtless been surpassed by many an unknown woman who was merely 'a violet by a mossy stone half hidden from the eye.'

NOVEMBER 7: As one grows older, I note with unceasing surprise and amusement, the world more and more bears the aspect of play. That is to say, according to the theory of play which is associated with Schiller's name, it is for the most part an expenditure of energy in exuberant and unnecessary ways. As one grows older, no doubt one has less excess of energy and that may well be one of the reasons why one grows more sensitively alive to the exuberant and unnecessary character of the actions of men and women in general, which make life to consist so much in play.

The really essential things in life, if one looks strictly at it, are simple and few. So simple and so few that we are inclined to hide them from sight, to forget them; we may even attempt to neglect them altogether. It is especially so in youth. For youth is solemn. It has, I suppose, so much superfluous energy that that exuberance seems to it necessary, and indeed the only necessity, and so it may never see the really necessary things at all. That is partly why childhood is so often a

drama, a tragic drama. That, again, is why nearly all crimes of violence are perpetrated by the young. That is why we have war, for war would be impossible but for the eager readiness of youth to be bloodthirsty and solemn, and to talk seriously of 'glory' and 'patriotism,' and to use all the other play-words. They tell us that this is all as it should be, for war cultivates the virtue of courage and keeps the population down. It might be suggested that there are more useful ways of cultivating courage and less gruesome methods of controlling the growth of the population. But it is not permitted to diminish the solemn drama of life or to interfere with the conventional worship of youth, and it would not be decorous to ask whether playful foolery might not be as good for mankind as solemn foolery.

Yesterday I went to the Phoenix's performance of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* — more or less appropriately accompanied by a beautiful American Jewess — and it only now occurs to me that these reflections may have their unconscious source in that play. For all the symbolism of youth is here in its exalted and bloodthirsty Elizabethan shape, only Marlowe, possessing not only Elizabethan youth but also high genius, has deliberately inserted touches of irony and humour into the presentation, so that yesterday the audience was not sure whether to grieve or to laugh over the tragedy. As we grow older it must ever be so in face of the tragedy of youth.

NOVEMBER 9: I awoke, soon after falling asleep, from a dream in which I had seen myself lying fully dressed on a rug close to a hot fire. I entered the room, approached, bent low over myself, and saw that during my absence the fire had grown very fierce, so that my clothes and apparently my body were smouldering. I was concerned — though in no inordinate degree — for it seemed to me

very doubtful that I should ever be able to use my body again.

On carefully searching memory I was able to recall various slight impressions and sensations of the day which may well have furnished the elements synthetised in the dream, but the synthesis itself was totally alien to my waking mind.

There are many, I believe, who still refuse to accept the influence of dreams in moulding our waking beliefs and the most fundamental superstitions of human history. I have never doubted it ever since I began to think about the matter at all. If all over the world the belief in 'spirits' may be found, and even in the highest civilisations the conception of Man's 'spiritual' nature still persists, how can we refuse to accept the influence of the mechanism of dreams in aiding to evolve and maintain those beliefs?

NOVEMBER 14: This Cornish November — and it is a more typical and prolonged Cornish 'St. Martin's summer' — than I seem ever to have known — is for me a perpetual miracle. I remain always virginal to its gracious influence. It is hard to remember I have felt it so often before, still harder to realise that it is only yesterday I left London where for ten days I had been breathing sooty fog beneath a dank and cheerless sky.

'I cannot bother about climate,' a friend wrote to me the other day. I do not share that attitude; on the contrary, I would be more inclined to say that climate is the only thing worth 'bothering' about. At all events I would certainly regard it, together with love and philosophy, as one of the things most necessary to the soul, as distinct from the body. (I know, of course, that the distinction between the soul and the body is arbitrary and merely conventional; yet it remains convenient, just as it remains convenient to speak of the sun-

rise, and it even has in it, rightly understood, a real significance.) For it is a joy of the soul that I experience here, transcending whatever may always remain alien to me and aloof in this land of Cornwall, and my heart sings the Prologue of the angels in Heaven over a world that is

‘Herrlich wie am ersten Tag.’

So I wander in ecstasy about this valley of the blue-flowered privet, therefrom, it is said, once called Sciedgewith, on the flanks of the Lizard, and now wrapt in a calm silence beneath a cloudless sky, while a smooth ocean strikes with a gentle leisurely resounding plash against the cliffs, plash so full of reminiscence that it almost brings tears to my eyes. An occasional dead leaf falls slowly and softly to earth, but the birds are always alive and their twittering is dominated by the thrush, lordly and indefatigable artist. Now and again I see one of the dainty Neolithic girls of this land pass by — so out of date in an age of coal and iron and electricity — demurely vivacious, one with her milk-can, another in her short skirts astride a horse, while the fishermen are busier with their boats than they ever seemed to be last winter. Then I fling myself down in the complete solitude of the hillside over the sea to bask full length in the sun, while the gulls move around in spiral flight, a maze of white and sparkling stars against the blue, and two strange birds circle over me with a peculiar and rather personally intoned emphatic chuckle to greet and welcome me back.

NOVEMBER 24: ‘Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand’ — One wonders whether any other simile is by civilised Man so often applied to himself, or rather to other members of his species, as that image. Any-one who ventures into the beaten roads of journalism, or

other literature of the degraded popular sort, during recent centuries cannot fail to hear the familiar sound of this simile, tolling like a funeral bell, at intervals, it would almost seem, of only a few minutes.¹

One knows, almost instinctively, that the ostrich cannot possibly do anything of the sort. To make sure, I once inquired of a friend who happens to be the chief authority on the manners and customs of the ostrich — for in his writings on the subject he had not even condescended to mention this superstition — and he told me that the ostrich really has a habit which might give some faint show of plausibility to such a supposition, and that by lowering its head the ostrich is really enabled to become less conspicuous. But Man remains the only biped which puts its head in the sand, closing its eyes in order to be able to ignore the facts. No bird could afford to do it. The world is not made for the survival of such. Even Man could not afford to do it if in his earlier stages he had not been clever enough to build around himself a great protective wall within which he can now indulge all the vagaries of his stupidity with seeming impunity.

So from the days of the book of *Job* and the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah, and I know not how far earlier, Man has sent the ostrich out into the desert as the scapegoat to bear his own vices of stupidity and cruelty fastened to its head. And the passing bell of that simile continues to be heard at regular intervals, while the solemn procession of human imbecilities passes slowly along the roads of the world towards that eternal cemetery which is not yet in sight: 'Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand ——'

¹ The earliest reference given in the *Oxford Dictionary* is from an anonymous writer of 1623: 'Like the Austridge who, hiding her little head, supposeth her great body obscured.' It is not clear to me when the statement originated. I do not notice it in Pliny.

NOVEMBER 25: 'Zola, Daudet, and all their followers are not worthy to untie the shoe-laces of Dostoievski.' So Taine said to De Vogüé nearly forty years ago. All the world thinks so now. But it needed the insight of genius to see it in 1884. That it should have been just Taine to possess that insight a little puzzles me, for I do not easily associate a passion for Dostoievski with the tall grave scholarly unseeing person whom I remember catching a glimpse of as he emerged — with that air of feeling his way which short-sighted persons sometimes have — as I was entering the afternoon At Home of a distinguished lady in Paris who had invited me to meet the great critic, though fearful of arriving too early I arrived too late.

'All the world thinks so now.' But does it? It cannot be long since I was astonished to read in Kropotkin's little book on Russian literature that he was unable to get through the *Brothers Karamazov*. Now I am no devourer of novels. I approach them with many precautions. For the most part I have found Cervantes and Fielding, Tolstoy and Flaubert, Stendhal and Proust, Hardy and Conrad and Régnier enough — sometimes more than enough — for me, except when the curiosity of novelty leads me to try little-known books, or some friend writes a novel in which I hope to find at all events a congenial human document. But the *Brothers Karamazov* I feel as though I could read again and again, almost, I was about to say — but that would be excessive — as I feel about *Wilhelm Meister*. Kropotkin, I should have thought, possessed the essential Russian temperament, the same impulse to saintliness, which should have made him sympathetic, even though he moved on another plane, to Dostoievski. But no doubt I should remember that we are most hostile to those who are most slightly separated from us, and that I have often observed that the saints, while infinitely tender to sinners, are apt to be censorious towards fellow-saints.

Yet Dostoievski a saint? With this man, you see, one is always asking questions, and that may well be in part why he is fascinating. One would say there ought not to be room for questions: no artist has more faithfully squeezed out — as we commonly say expressed — in his work his own most intimate nature. It ought all to be quite simple. Yet it is ever the simplest things that are the hardest. The simplicity of Dostoievski was highly complex. His was a profoundly human nature, and that is tolerably simple, but his humanity was highly morbid, and that involves a problem which is no longer simple. Dostoievski was a genuinely epileptic subject, and that, which seems to be an unquestioned fact, alone renders him a unique phenomenon, because, so far as we positively know, there has been no other genuinely and unquestionably epileptic man of literary genius, for the case of Flaubert is too dubious. Now epilepsy is apt to be associated with moral perversity, and one asks oneself what the perversities were that obsessed Dostoievski. It is not a question it yet seems possible to answer precisely, for those who might have answered it have been reticent and uttered veiled sayings. Dr. Gaston Loygue, in his valuable and illuminative medico-psychological study of Dostoievski, not only brings out the constantly recurring algolagnic strain in the novelist's work, but repeatedly states that there are facts in Dostoievski's life which cannot yet be published without indiscretion. When we recall the peculiar fascination which in his work children seem to exercise on Dostoievski, and the naked intimacy of his touch where they are concerned, one seems to divine a significance in Stavrogin's confession — the passage omitted from *The Possessed* on moral grounds — and lately printed in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* — and the significance of that paidophilic and sadistic incident lies precisely in the peculiar hesitant mystery in which it is enveloped. (How clearly and objectively the normal Balzac, to say nothing of

Zola, would have brought it forward.) Merejkovski, who called attention to this passage long before it was published, remarked that it was easy to understand its continued suppression for it is of a sincerity which goes beyond art. It is not necessary to conclude that Dostoievski ever carried morbid impulse to completed action. Doubtless he possessed manifold perverse impulses which may have remained impulses except in so far as they were transmuted into art. But their significance, we have to realise, is not normal but abnormal. By the fundamental texture of his soul Dostoievski could only rise to the divine from a human foundation that was perverse, and what it was in the beginning it necessarily remained, however sublimated, in the end. Dostoievski was the Saint of Sinners, and all his work — to so complete a degree that many superficial readers have been thereby deceived — the Idealisation of Perversity.

NOVEMBER 27: I have walked once again by the familiar path to Kynance, as ever completely deserted at this time of the year, so that when I stood at the top of the cliff lost in dreams of the past, a dog, who seemed in sole possession of the little hotel far down below, catching sight of me, barked irritably at my intrusion on his privacy, until I discreetly disappeared along the opposite slope and settled down in the sunshine with my note-book.

It was not only dreams of the past that filled my brain. I had also been meditating as I came along the path on a subject that has sometimes occupied me before, the philosophy of obscenity, and its æsthetic place in life and in art, a subject for which this pure sky and clear water form the desirable background. There had casually flitted across my mind the thought of a woman who had visited me shortly before I left London, and that started the problem afresh. For my friend

approaches the subject of obscenity with an undismayed air which seems to savour not at all of the English and even Puritanic environment out of which she springs. It is not that she suffers from too bridled or too unbridled a sexuality — she is the happy wife of a husband to whom she is devoted — nor is her serenity that of innocent indifference, for she is alertly interested while yet retaining a shy modesty. I am inclined to find the key to her attitude in the fact that there is Indian blood in her veins, and that she is remotely of the race of Vatsyayane, though she never, I think, read his book.

So I seem to see why in the modern western world, especially in England, most of all in America, it has become so difficult to be rightly obscene — and so unnaturally easy to be coarse and vulgar — and why obscenity is treated with so much reprehension and even horror. The natural play of the impulses has been checked; the particular twist of our culture has on one side impeded the manifestations of obscenity and on the other side, when that impulse has burst its bonds, subjected it to our British tendency to what Coleridge called *nimiety*, too-muchness, with the inevitable result that a natural reaction of disgust has been set up to fortify the artificial reaction of moral propriety. An old friend now dead — his sister had been a famous mystic and he himself once a Franciscan father, so perhaps he considered he was privileged to cultivate the esoteric branches of erotic literature — once lent me that huge novel of Cleland's which is considered the masterpiece among obscenely erotic books in English, and after the first hundred pages or so I found it tedious. One may approve of obscenity in principle; in practice even its recognised masters barely attain success.

Certainly, into every great and true picture of life there must necessarily enter both its obverse and reverse sides, not only the revelation of the stage but the intimation of what Lucretius called the *Postscenia vitae*. Without an element of

the obscene there can be no true and deep æsthetic or moral conception of life. But the obscene must be kept in its place, it must be controlled, it must be held in due relation to the whole. Only those who have been well trained in watching the stage of life can dare successfully to complete the picture by revealing life behind the scene. That no doubt is why in our northern world the great writers who have been obscene were mostly trained in the Church; they needed that discipline, they needed that vision of the world, to be æsthetically obscene. That also, no doubt, is why the merely loose and small undisciplined men can never be rightly obscene, however hard they try. It is only the great men who are truly obscene. It is that touch which stamps their genius. It gives profundity and truth to their vision of life. If they had not dared to be obscene they could never have dared to be great. Their vision of the world would have remained fatally marred.

NOVEMBER 30: When I was in Saffron Walden Museum in the spring, trying to make out clearly the difference between a thrush and a missel thrush, I glanced at a blackbird and realised, with a shock of surprised pleasure, that it may be defined, among the birds of its family, as a deeply pigmented thrush. I had discovered, for the first time clearly, what may well be a fact familiar to most people. But for me the discovery was full of revelation: it opened out a far vista along which I have from time to time been gazing ever since.

It so happens that to me the blackbird's song, apart from any estimate of its artistic value in the world of bird-music, happens to be peculiarly congenial. I regard it — so indeed it is usually regarded — as a contralto song. Moreover the music and the kinds of musical instruments that appeal to me intimately — again apart from the question of purely æsthe-

tic appreciation — are usually those that may be said to be of the same quality. Even in dancing, it is the slow and grave quality of certain Spanish dances which has expressed to me most nearly the intuition of what in the field of rhythmic movement is called 'Beauty.' But in other fields also it is still what may reasonably be regarded as the same quality transformed which makes an intimate personal appeal to me. It is similarly that, however impartially I may accept all colours in their place, I would yet desire them fully saturated. It seems not difficult, if it were worth while, to trace the same harmony of transformed concordances in other fields. It is, indeed, after all, what we call *style*. Each individual has his own structure, and all his modes of æsthetic sensibility, all his activities based on those modes, however endlessly various, yet take on the same individual form, and move with the same rhythm. The interesting new thing I see is a harmony not only in the style of the organised personality's soul, but also even on the physical plane, the style of Nature. I have sometimes been inclined to feel that of musical forms the fugue — in which the same theme is constantly heard yet never in quite the same form — is nearest to the essence of Nature. It could not be otherwise if Nature is thus a perpetual fugue, forever repeating the same thing on a new and different plane.

There is yet another step to take. What is true of the style of the individual personality is true also — and that is not strange if we are concerned with elemental Nature — of the style of a whole culture or civilisation. It has often flashed across my mind that every age is always saying the same thing, its own peculiar message, in different forms. Of recent years — worked out in an elaborately emphatic way and in what may sometimes seem fantastic detail — that has become the Spenglerian conception of culture. Spengler, as we know, holds that in the old classic world the conception of a city-state, the nude statue, Euclid's geometry, Greek coins, were

all various expressions of the same cultural soul, all saying the same thing in different ways, and that the like is true of our own civilisation, which expresses itself similarly in printing, in credit, in perspective, in contrapuntal music, in long-range artillery, in many other things that at first glance look no less unlike.

So every person that is a person, every civilisation, every universe, may have its own style, its own peculiar rhythm, multifoldly expressed in all its most varied manifestations. That is the vista along which I look. It seems all to stretch out from my great and no doubt simple-minded discovery at Saffron Walden that the blackbird is a deeply pigmented thrush.

 **D**ECEMBER 23: François de Curel, it appears, in his play *Ame en Folie*, brings forward the Darwinian theory, and puts face to face what seem to him the opposing pictures of an animal world in which sexual selection is effected by force and a human world in which — as it were contrary to 'Nature' — sexual selection operates by the subtler influence of affinity determined by love and beauty.

That is, of course, a complete perversion of the matter, whether as presented in the world of facts or in the pages of Darwin. But that a dramatist commonly regarded as of high intellectual quality should find this a reasonable view seems to give us an insight into many popular delusions.

In Nature generally 'brute' force is only an occasional accident of courtship, which is primarily affected by the more gracious appeal of strength to the sense, sometimes developed into an art and sometimes displayed in the very texture of the body, whether through energy or skill or dance or song or colour or fragrance; while, as to love, if a devotion which dares death is proof of love, it is found oftener among so-called

brutes than among men. This rule of beauty and love in sexual selection prevails not only among the lower animals but also in Man at the stages below barbarism, when it began to be transformed. It is then that the rule of force in affairs generally, which Man is supposed to transcend, becomes clearly pronounced. Its application in civilised human life is cruder, more direct, more ruthless than it is among either the lower animals or the lower human races, that is to say, those still in a state of savagery. War, for instance, which may well be of comparatively late appearance in human history, seems long to have been a harmless and even beneficial kind of sport; it was civilisations which rendered it deadly. The American journalist who wrote not so many years ago 'Your soldier is only a glorified athlete and war is the greatest of all sports' was stating a great truth, though he stated it some five thousand years too late.

But that change, on the side of sexual selection, goes with another change of not less revolutionary character: the female no longer chooses the male, but — in principle or what we might call theory which is by no means always practice, for naturally the older principle, though overlaid, is still there and still operative — the male chooses the female. These two facts, we see, are of the same order and merely different aspects of a single change in life. With the approach of civilisation force gains a predominating part and woman takes a more subordinate place, the chosen rather than the chooser.

If what we call force is in a sense unnatural, if it has, as we may find reason to believe, a disintegrating influence even on the civilisation that brings it into credit, what would seem to follow? Shall we see a return towards the once more normal state through men claiming the beauty which was once rightfully theirs and women once again becoming the choosers rather than the chosen in sexual selection? Perhaps indeed that is what the species is already, on a new plane, feeling its way towards.

CHRISTMAS DAY: When I ponder, as it has often been my lot to do, on the details of the intimate histories of men and women — on that side of the sphere of life, I mean, which is not shown to the sun — I am so often impressed by the benefits they derive, whether or not they are always willing to recognise it, from what we commonly hold to be weaknesses and vices.

We may, of course, argue — and that is indeed the consideration which most often commends itself to me — that we are called upon so to reconstruct our conventional scheme of right and of wrong, of good and of evil, that nothing which aids a human soul in its path through life, provided it injures no other soul, should ever be termed a weakness or a vice.

Yet even if we preserve our conventional scheme of moral rules, and evade any revolutionary moral reconstruction, there is still ample scope for the practice of the higher virtues of judgment and charity. It is still open to us to exercise sympathy and insight; we may still exert our intelligence in unravelling those complicated threads of life and character which are never twisted in quite the same strands for any two individuals. Thus we may find that what we continue to insist on describing technically as a weakness or a vice is justified by its joy-bestowing and life-stimulating properties. We shall have to say, as Goethe said, with his usual assurance of the Divine Process, that God has given us our naughtinesses to help us. He might have added that when they fail to help us it is best to give them back with as little delay as possible.

JANUARY 15, 1923: Those whom we love sometimes feel, when we have been or seemed to be unkind, even if they do not say: 'You will be sorry when I am dead.' It is

a natural thing to feel and the thought that it has been felt cannot but bring a pang to our hearts. And yet — are we right to feel sorry?

For if we truly loved we have done our best, we have been moved by the strongest motive in all the world to do our best, and if all our failures and weaknesses and perversities have not been more than balanced by the strong achievements of our love, then we must be from the outset but poor creatures, so to fail in the most joyous task in the whole world, creatures too poor for sorrow, even their own.

The transformation of love effected by death is really the problem that here concerns us. It is mainly an intellectual problem. No emotional disposition suffices to help here. It may only lead to vain and meaningless remorse. We are really in the presence of a psychological mutation. Madame de Noailles (when speaking after his death of her long friendship with Marcel Proust) has delicately perceived this. She remarks how the death of dear friends suddenly presents them to us 'tout entiers.' Our life with those we love is necessarily made up of a perpetual succession of detailed episodes. The very diversities of life involve constant difference of reaction; the very closeness of the bonds of intimate affection involve a sort of combat which itself testifies to the spiritual contact. But from the moment of final silence the small diversities of life pass out of view and the combat instantly falls, all the hours shared together are suddenly grouped, for the first time, into a single whole. 'Oh! how just, divine, and mysterious a thing it is never to be able to think again of the dead as we thought of him living!' There may be a peculiar significance in this reflection when we remember that it was suggested by so perverse a personality as Proust seems to have possessed, yet it has in some degrees a general justification.

For this sudden fact of death instantly moves from our feet a revolving earth that was made of rapid passing episodes —

now arduous, now anxious, now delicious — and transforms it all into a distant and unchangeable star. All the conflicts of life and all its agitations have grown as meaningless as its passing delights. The difference in our emotional attitude is an inescapable adjustment to a new relationship. At first the star seems afar because we miss the earth at our feet. But the star remains and shines ever brighter in our eyes as the memories of earth grow dim.

FEBRUARY 20: One remembers the remark of Goethe to Eckermann that women are plates of silver on which men place apples of gold. In a recent book I see that symbolic remark brought forward as a sort of fundamental fact of the evolution of love. As Goethe said it, however, it was simply a fine and true statement of his own personal experience as an artist, for he proceeded to explain that the women characters in his works were not abstracted from reality but 'inborn or arising within him God knows how,' and, on that account, 'better than those met in reality.' He had indeed often brought the golden apple of his art to women who were, at best, of silver. That must always happen to the artist more often than not. Golden art is rare, and women — or men — of gold are likewise rare, so that it can seldom happen that the apple of gold is placed on the dish of gold. One knows little or nothing of Shelley's Emilia or Poe's Helen, but we could not possibly expect them to be of such fine gold as the exquisitely wrought dishes on which they are for ever set before the world. The divine Beatrice whom the artist creates must always be of a nobler metal than the ordinary earthly girl of that name whom God was content to create. But no artist has created apples of finer gold than Sappho, and we may be sure that whether they were offered to men or to women the plates were at the best only of silver. It is a ques-

tion of the quality of art and the quality of human nature, and not a question of sex.

But that is not all. When Goethe's saying is solemnly universalised it is forgotten that there are also golden apples of human nature, apples of love as well as of art. And of these apples, also, it may be said that they are set on plates of silver, indeed by no means seldom on plates of just common pottery which in a short time are broken. Nor can it be said that these plates are more often of feminine than of masculine gender. Indeed nearly all the golden love-letters of the world have been written by women and they have for the most part been written to men who were of far less precious substance than gold.

So again I find that Goethe's saying, however precisely true in the sense in which it was uttered, will not bear translation into a larger philosophical statement. I am not likely to underestimate the mental and physical differences of sex. But I object to the assumption of such differences where none exist, and where we have to seek a cleavage along other than sexual lines.

MARCH 3: I saw a man, turning out from a side street near where I live, who was somehow not like other people: a shabbily dressed old man, wearing a very old coat with a fur collar, and he carried a very old leather bag with a Maltese Cross painted on it, and he walked with the quiet preoccupied air of a man who took himself altogether as a matter of course, while to me he was an object of joy and speculation (like the Spanish pilgrim I once saw in the streets of Zamora with great cockleshells fastened to his coat, strayed it seemed out of the mediæval world) whose inexplicable presence momentarily exhilarated the whole of life.

Now why cannot there be more people like that? Why can

not everyone be like that? That is to say, all totally unlike everyone else among the millions surrounding them and yet each in his unique way just his own serene matter-of-fact self and a source of joy and speculation to the beholder? The reason I find the people in the street so dull and depressing is that, as deeply as I can penetrate in the single glance of them I catch, I seem vaguely to have seen nearly every one of them before. What I ask of each individual is that he or she should be a perpetual and unique miracle. It seems but a little to ask. Nature is a perpetual miracle, and why should Man, who supposes himself to be so supreme a product of Nature, be so dull and depressing in the mass? I fill my life and my thoughts as I may with the few rare people I have known who are perpetually miraculous. Yet I see no reason why they should be so rare, so fatally held in grip by the herd instinct.

And why should not communities, cities, states, be themselves? So that therewith each might work out the mode of life, with all its latent new possibilities, which suited its own temperament and tradition and environment, and be free to exercise it with all its own moralities, even though the whole world were exercising other modes of life with other moralities. Mankind seems so far to have learnt nothing from the example offered by America. There never was, there never will be, another so vast and magnificent opportunity for filling a continent with half a hundred variegated and wonderful States, each totally and yet harmoniously different from the others, as North America presented a century or two ago. If God himself had planned it, the opportunity could not have been grander. The best and most varied environments were present, with the best and most varied migrants from old Europe offering themselves, with the finest seeds for great social ideals, with new fantastic communities already germinally sprinkled over the rich and promising soil, some of them, however swiftly suppressed, always to re-

main memorable in the world's history. But then a strange fate befell. Men and states became alike possessed by a fierce eruption of the Herd Instinct. They were both standardised, and woe to the individuals or the communities which went beyond the measure of that standard rule, for the same customs and laws and ideals that ruled in one State ruled in all States. They all ran down the same steep place and were all lost in the same sea of uniformity, for Judge Lynch saw to it that the spirits of any rebels, if not their bodies, were duly destroyed.

They speculate that some day our solar system may perish in a sudden conflagration or collision, or else slowly freeze. But surely, long before that final catastrophe, Man will have disappeared, dead of boredom at his own monotony.

MARCH 17: I have been exercised for I do not know how many years by the problem of the origin of new forms of æsthetic sensibility: the problem, that is to say, why new forms of æsthetic sensibility are ever arising and old forms ever disappearing, alike in the individual and in the crowd, which sometimes, though not always, is able to discern what in the first place one or two individuals only had discovered. It is a problem that must really go back at least as far as Palæolithic Man, for even if we believe that the motives of the men of that age in art were primarily of a magical nature, still they expressed themselves in changing forms which were calculated to appeal to what even the man of modern culture recognises as a delicate æsthetic sense.

We have to grant an initial general æsthetic sensibility. There seems no difficulty in that. And if that is granted, we must accept the possibility of changes or variations. An excessive reaction to one kind of stimulus produces fatigue, and so another kind of reaction is a grateful physiological relief.

It is a familiar phenomenon how we turn from the æsthetic fashions — and æsthetic must here include religious — prevailing in our youth to new fashions; and our children, weary of our 'new' fashions, find a delicious novelty in the old fashions we had rejected. We see how attractive many of those Victorian things we were born amid, and loathed, have become to a new generation. But that is only a general verity, and it is the special manifestations of it that intrigue my curiosity.

We have to define at the outset when a mere general appreciation and enjoyment becomes a genuine æsthetic sensitiveness to a particular art manifestation, and that distinction itself can only be made as a kind of intuition; there is no precise standard of measurement to apply. The vogue of Dumas and Dickens and Dostoievski has nothing to do with æsthetic sensitivity — though all these writers may make that appeal to a few — but merely to an indiscriminating excited interest. It seems to me doubtful whether Shake peare ever found any person during his lifetime possessed of the æsthetic sensibility to enjoy him (I doubt it even as regards so sound a critic as Ben Jonson, though he may have come nearest), or even for more than a century after his death; it appeared with the Romantic Movement, and perhaps Goethe was its pioneer. Ben Jonson, and to some extent Chapman, appealed much more to the æsthetic sensibility of Elizabethan and Jacobean days, and it was around them that the æsthetically sensitive young men of that age gathered. That is not, indeed, surprising; if we had not known it we might have guessed it. If we examine the actual tone of feeling in that age, the quality of nervous sensibility, it becomes clear that Shakespeare on the higher plane, and Ford on a lower — even though their contemporaries might find much in them to enjoy — could not possibly be appreciated in that intimate degree that became easy for the men of a later age.

Even when we may reasonably assume that poets encountered a genuine æsthetic appreciation, the disappearance and reëmergence of that sensibility often seems mysterious. The poets of the later seventeenth century, the so-called 'metaphysical school,' were so numerous, they must surely have been sensitively felt in their intimate quality by those around them, and we know the immense influence of Cowley, who was indeed too wide in his appeal to be confined within the bonds of a 'metaphysical' school. But when the seventeenth century was over they rapidly became unintelligible and worse, mere butts for scoffing and ridicule. It is only within the last twenty or thirty years that, first, Donne, the earliest of them, and then the rest, have been discovered to vibrate to the rhythm of our modern temperaments. But why?

It is in the individual's tastes, however, that the problem of æsthetic sensibility is most clearly presented. Then we can largely eliminate the mob-suggestion, the influence of fashion or authority, and are brought up against the central fact. It is a kind of 'conversion,' as would be said in the special case of religious sensibility, a sudden revolution by which something that was foreign suddenly becomes as it were native, something that was ugly becomes beautiful. That is an experience that perhaps happens to us — as again with religion — most definitely in youth. I remember that the writing of Whitman seemed barbaric and ridiculous to me until one day, suddenly, I saw it afresh, much as I have continued to see it ever since. Similar experiences occur to others. So fine and sensitive an artist as René Boylesve has lately confessed that when he first turned his attention to Proust's writing he found it unreadable, though now it delights him.

But it is in painting that æsthetic sensibility seems to me most easy to examine because most clearly marked. Shakespeare was always played and read, so that it remains possible for the shallow observer to suppose that the same æsthetic

sensibility prevailed throughout. No such claim could be made for Velasquez. His royal master Philip IV may possibly have understood him, since Kings are well placed for æsthetic appreciation, and his contemporary Giordano, if he really painted that wonderful *pastiche* in the London National Gallery long attributed to Velasquez himself, may have understood, but for the most part one seeks in vain, except perhaps among one or two English amateurs, for any sign of genuine sensibility to the peculiar qualities of that artist, until the nineteenth century when Manet and Whistler showed in their work the sincerity of their sensibility to Velasquez. We cannot understand this better than by turning to Reynolds' *Discourses*, for here, even in the admiration which that highly intelligent and receptive English master felt for the Portrait of Pope Innocent we cannot help discerning that he was really blind to the qualities in Velasquez that thrill us; to Reynolds, it would seem, the Innocent portrait is a fine example of the kind of thing Titian had done. Vermeer of Delft, who is a sort of Dutch Velasquez, has taken as long to affect æsthetic sensibility; to-day every picture of his seems exquisitely beautiful even to people who know nothing of painting; yet till a few years ago his name was scarcely mentioned. It is even the same with the Italian masters who of all are the most popular. No painter, for instance, seems more obviously attractive than Botticelli, and yet before the days of Ruskin he was merely one in an indistinguishable and little-noted crowd. So also with Carpaccio.

It sometimes seems that there are fashions which some popular expert foists on the public. But that is an inadequate explanation. Any such influence would swiftly glide off the public's slippery back. The man who proclaims the new admiration is merely a more eloquent and daring exponent of what all are already vaguely beginning to feel.

I realise this in my own experience. I remember how, years

ago, I was fascinated by Vermeer's 'Head of a Young Girl' at the Hague, long before it was described by an enthusiast as 'the most beautiful thing in Holland,' and when, I believe, it had only recently been acquired and Vermeer was as little known to me as to most of the rest of the world. And I have long admired Caravaggio in silence — ever since more than a quarter of a century ago I saw the 'Lute Player' at the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna and felt that here was the creator of seventeenth-century art and so of our later art — and now I find that this long neglected master is at length becoming appreciated. One could easily go on pointing out the continual emergence at some moment of a new widespread general sensibility to some neglected phase of art.

I see afresh, indeed, that this intuitive revelation to æsthetic sensibility of a painter's special view of the world is really of the nature of religious conversion. It is as explicable as that, no doubt, but no more explicable. And the more clearly one realises that fact the more clearly one understands the solid reality of mysticism as at once the essence of religion and the supreme manifestation of æsthetic sensibility. If we could use that once ridiculed term 'æsthete' seriously, one might say that the Mystic is the æsthete of the Universe.

APRIL 29: I remember how — nearly fifty years ago now — a friend in Australia who had formerly been a New South Wales Government official, told me he had once come officially in contact with Anthony Trollope, and how surprised he had been to note, though he was himself a man of singularly mild disposition, the extreme nervousness and timidity of the famous novelist.

Trollope wrote an *Autobiography*. I have never more than glanced at it but a distinguished literary critic has just read it in a new reprint and he published his impressions of it in

yesterday's *Nation*. For our critic, Trollope seems in his *Autobiography* the stolid incarnation of energy and audacity. The critic even refuses to believe Trollope's own statement that he was tormented in boyhood by his companions; 'if anyone tormented him Trollope would have knocked him out,' the critic imagines; 'he was a force of Nature.... There was about him, almost physically, an animal odour of masculinity.'

Trollope was an artist, as much so in imaging himself as his other creations, and I am amused to see how he has evidently been able to deceive even the elect. For I cannot doubt that so good a critic has correctly, however ingenuously, perceived at least the surface values of Trollope's *Autobiography*, although one would have supposed that to an acute critic the kind of man whom he supposes Trollope to have been is not the kind of man who devotes his life to fine literary creation. At all events the great literary artists I have come across were not like that, and if we go back to the ages commonly regarded as more robust I should be surprised to learn on unimpeachable authority that Chaucer and Spenser and Shakespeare bore about them a peculiarly animal odour of masculinity.

We may hear rather too much of psycho-analysis nowadays. But evidently there is some advantage for a literary critic in possessing a tincture of that discipline. When Alfred Adler formulated his doctrine of the 'masculine protest' — the tendency of sensitive and feminine and maybe defective souls to imagine themselves other than they are, and sometimes even to approximate themselves to what they imagine — he was throwing an illuminative ray of light over the artist, at all events those artists who have been more concerned with the arts of fiction than of science. Whenever we seem to come in contact with an artist who is excessively stolid and aggressively masculine we may profitably think of Trollope.

MAY 12: Sometimes I have wondered why it is that Man, and most of all comparatively civilised Man, has taken such joy in torturing himself and his fellows, why it is that he is ever setting up Inquisitions to inflict misery on others and in the intervals vigorously applying the discipline to his own back. It has sometimes seemed to me unnatural, a kind of pathological sadism and masochism.

Yesterday, while I watched with delight Major Dugmore's kinema records of his expedition to East Africa, to record the life of wild animals under conditions from which so-called 'sport' was eliminated, and thus wild animals be studied so far as possible under completely natural conditions, in their family life and ordinary occupations, the explanation began to dawn on me. All animals, it became clear, even under the most favourable natural conditions, even in the apparent absence of the supreme enemy Man, are leading a life of unceasing physical irritation and perpetual mental anxiety. Apart from the difficulties of obtaining food and water, and the need for constant guardianship of the young, there must be endless watchfulness against living enemies large and small, beasts of prey, and, scarcely less important, parasites. Ears, noses, tails must be for ever alert, always in vibratory movement, movement in some animals of an almost incredible swiftness. One notes on the film how often these animals are turning round in this everlasting *qui vive* even though there may not be the faintest sign of danger. The giraffes will stand in hesitation for an hour before actually coming down to the pool to drink, all the more, of course, if they can have the slightest suspicion of the concealed presence of any animal of that deadliest and cowardliest species which invented the rifle, even when he is armed with nothing more dangerous than a camera. The doves only dare to drink one swift sip, knowing that the turtles beneath the surface of the water are ready to dart out their heads and seize them. Even the huge ele-

phants have cautiously learnt to move through the forests so silently that a herd of them may be inaudible at a few yards' distance. Among the apes, so defenceless and such excellent eating, this nervousness is legitimately carried to the extreme. It is indeed only because they learned to climb trees that they escape extermination and were enabled to bestow to earth the dubious gift of Man.

Man by his infinite cleverness has held in check the dangers that threatened him from other animals, large and small. He has devised artificial weapons, he has made clothes, he has built walled cities, he has enlisted the police, he has discovered the use of standing armies and insecticide powders. He is still hopefully seeking for vaccines.

Yet the more successful these measures become the more he grows conscious of an unsatisfied want. For he still inherits the ancient impulse of anxiety and apprehension. It becomes a neurosis when it remains ungratified. So that when other animals cease to torture him he must torture himself. Having destroyed the wolf Man must become a wolf unto himself: *Homo homini lupus*. Man was born for fear and when he has destroyed the natural causes of fear it is inevitable that he should replace them by substitutes. Otherwise his natural aptitudes would fail of gratification. He must needs torture himself, when other things cease to torture him, because torture is part of Nature.

When the world first strikes upon our ignorant youthful vision it seems full of things that we call 'unnatural.' All our lives long we are slowly gaining a deeper insight into what is evidently the far from obvious truth that Nature is always natural.

JUNE 3: It is sometimes rather trying to have to live in a world where the essential things are hidden from sight by people who either fail to see them or take pains to ignore them or else openly profess that they are not there.

That is the feeling that underlies all my hostility and resentment at biography, as biography is commonly perpetrated, in spite of the fact that biography is precisely the form of literature which I am most ready to find of fascinating interest and of profound instruction. But paint them as they are, paint them as they are! I do not want a picture of clothes, that are not even them at all.

No doubt it is the altogether irrelevant moral prejudice that comes in to spoil all here. The biographer foolishly imagines he is a moralist, and so he puts in all the conventionally moral high lights and leaves out all that he supposes to be the immoral black shadows, and the picture is nonsensical and even non-existent. For every human creature so living that men have been affected by its life, and directed their eyes to its radiance even after death, was all of a piece and cannot thus be disintegrated without being destroyed.

I am thinking, though not alone, of the reviews I have just come across of the lately published Letters of a man I slightly knew. The reviewers discuss the question of whether he posed and attitudinised or whether he represented a spiritual enlightenment and a religious conversion. But the central fact which he had experienced — what he himself called ‘the very essence of the best things I’ve seen in my life’ — the essence as it appeared from the standpoint of God, however little sympathy it might evoke from the ordinary spectator, that they are unable to see or blankly ignore.

JUNE 26: I went up to London from the sea yesterday — flinging away recklessly one of the few hardly won days of warm sunshine this month has offered — to see the Phoenix's performance of Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*. The sacrifice, after all, was worth while. The Phoenix has done nothing better, not only in the acting but in all the accessories, not least the music. It all comes out as a finely harmonised unity.

It was well worth doing. So many years have passed since I was concerned with its text that *The Faithful Shepherdess* only lingered in memory as a vaguely pleasant thing written in free delicious verse that was beautifully adequate without being of supreme order. Now for the first time I clearly realise what the Arcadian pastoral, of which this is so admirable a type, represents in the history of the human spirit.

That the pastoral is the manifestation of an artificial mood of unreal playfulness in life seems usually to have been taken for granted. And it was so. But so to regard it, and to leave the matter there, is to overlook the motive source of its inspiration and the cause of its power. How it arose, the really essential question, is left unanswered.

When we consider that question, we see that, however artificially unreal the pastoral — poem, novel, or play — may seem to us, it arose primarily as a reaction against an artificially unreal and dissolving culture. The pastoral never originated in an integral, simple, vigorous, straight-forward stage of culture, still within actual sight of any true pastoral life. The Greeks of the age of Pericles had no use for *Daphnis and Chloe* and even *The Faithful Shepherdess* came a little before its due time in England, a little too near the robust classic period of Elizabeth, and so was not well received when first put on the stage. The pastoral belongs not to an age of strong faith and rugged action but rather to an age when faith has become uncertain and action hesitant or tortuous, an age

when criticism comes to be applied to what seems a dissolute time, a time of vice and hypocrisy, a time which has lost its old ideals. The attitude of Ben Jonson towards his own age is herein significant, and it is illustrated even in his laudatory verses about this very pastoral of Fletcher's, a poem 'murdered,' he says, by a generation unworthy of it, though it may not have been altogether the corruption of the age but in part the lingering 'old-fashioned simplicity' of it which rendered Fletcher's audience obtuse to the significance of *The Faithful Shepherdess*.

So it is that the pastoral arises not as an unreal artificiality but as a protest against an age of what seems unreal artificiality, put into the only form which is possible to poetic minds who feel what seems to their sensitive tempers the defects of their own age.

Fletcher, following the Italians who had earlier realised the same thing in their own more advanced culture, understood, or else instinctively felt, that the time had come in the course of the Renaissance mood, then even in England approaching its end, to find enchanting by contrast with his own age the picture of the old strong simple Pagan age, such as tradition represented it, yet touched with a tincture of what was sweetest and purest in the Christian world. He sought to present therein the implicit and indirect criticism of an age such as he felt his own was becoming, with its confusions and its vices and its perversities and its slaughter and its deceit. Such a form of art — a pastoral tragi-comedy Fletcher called it — has its superficial aspect of artificial unreality, but beneath that is the life-blood of a genuine impulse of art, exactly adapted — as such a spirit as Fletcher's so sensitively human and so finely cultured could not fail to make it — to the situation of the immediate post-Elizabethan age of the early seventeenth century.

For the general public, at all events that of the theatre, it

appeared a little prematurely because they were not themselves yet clear where they stood. It was not till half a century later that the age, having become more conscious of its own state, was enabled to enjoy *The Faithful Shepherdess*, and Pepys notes that it is 'much thronged after and often shown.'

To-day, after centuries of neglect, by those few people privileged to be present it is again approved, and is perhaps the most genuinely and enthusiastically applauded of the Phoenix's excellent revivals of old plays. Our age has an analogy to that of the Restoration. We, too, have lately emerged from a long period of war and we experience the same reactions as the Restoration period experienced. We can enter sympathetically into the things they enjoyed because, even under an antique garment, they answer to our own needs. Our youthful fire-eaters of the Great War are beginning to feel a little disillusioned. Their patriotic thirst for blood has cooled; I do not hear them talk, as I heard a young officer in 1914, of cutting up their enemies 'like pork.' They begin to understand that murder is an activity in which it is desirable to exercise a certain moderation; they are visited by a suspicion that in seeking to destroy a youthful nation potent for the civilisation of the future they have perhaps earned a name quite other than that of 'heroes.' They begin to be ready for such criticism as Fletcher sprinkled over his age when he playfully presented a magical world in which one may be brutally murdered twice before beginning to lead a happy life. There is still hope for the world!

JULY 30: It is the fashion among some of the younger writers of France to show contempt for Flaubert — 'faire pipi sur Flaubert' as it has been expressed over there — and even estimable critics, indecorous as it may seem, are occasionally found indulging this youthful impulse. The prac-

tice has indeed spread to England and I seem to remember anonymous writers in this attitude through columns of literary reviews in which they finally dismissed Flaubert as a small inferior writer. One need not be disturbed. There yet remain some in every age who are not carried away by such streams of contempt, and I note that so excellent a critic as Thibaudet in his book on Flaubert is content to remark briefly that the discredit into which Flaubert has fallen is mainly 'a temporary accident,' and that he who so disdained the public may well remain content when the crowd disdains him and continue, like the Juggler of Our Lady, to worship the God within him after his own manner.

For my own part I also am well content. I recognize and I altogether sympathise with the present tendency to regard the opposite methods of Stendhal as an ideal of literature, for my attachment to Stendhal dates from early youth. And since Flaubert himself was completely unable to appreciate Stendhal it is meet that he himself should encounter the same reprobation. Yet there remains no author whom I turn to more often than Flaubert or with a greater reverence. In my private gallery his portrait stands only below Goethe's. I have been reading his *Correspondance* — to say nothing of the other books which I have known more or less since I was seventeen — for the past ten years and with a joy that never fails. But I am not anxious that he should be regarded as the head of a school which has no existence, or receive the dubiously precious salutations of the crowd. The critic who undertakes to head off the general herd from this direction may claim my gratitude, though he may not win my esteem.

AUGUST 23: It all seems like a dream, this visit to the Midi, to a region I have always avoided before but desired to see something of at last, from the swift flight

in the air to Paris — so tame after that of two years ago! — to the return journey in the night Rapide from Nice, with windows closed through the sombre glow of flaming forest trees in the Esterel, at the end of this southern dream of ever cloudless skies and unbroken heat: Tamaris, Antibes with Juan les Pins, Cagnes, lying in the sea or sun-bathing on the shore, with La Douce by my side, a miracle of radiant energy under the sun of her ancestral land, at times threatening to become almost as fierce as it, while I have never been so lazy in my life before, and even now with the shadow of that delightful languor over me, even with this 'invasion of Polar air' over England which the Meteorological Bureau reports as though it were a novelty, I find no inclination to write down our adventures or to tell of the delightful friends we sought out at Seyne-sur-Mer and the atmosphere of the *Arabian Nights* that surrounded their villa. It all seems like a dream, even to the bugs that the horrified La Douce found in her bed at the luxurious Grand Hotel.

Now, a few days after my return — looking through accumulated piles of letters — I come on a press-cutting, sent by some unknown American friend, who, I am sure, had no thought of awaking me from my dream, entitled 'Unscientific and Filthy,' and narrating the prosecution—though it was not clear how the matter ended — of a man somewhere in Canada for selling certain books in which I feel a very personal interest, as being of a most horrible character, an opinion with which the seller himself agreed, while the magistrate was duly solemn.

At first I felt amusement touched with annoyance. It seemed as though I had been taken back into an antediluvian world I thought had fortunately vanished, or that some one had prised up a moss-grey stone and unexpectedly revealed the loathsome and bewildered maggots running about beneath. But I quickly accepted the situation with unsmiling serenity.

It has seemed to me, and especially of recent years, that people are apt to accept one's new vision of the world too easily, to accept indeed without really accepting, not grasping clearly what it is that they accept. One is thus seemingly joined by people who continue calmly to follow the same old course, however sympathetic they seem to become toward one's work, passing from violent repulsion to complacent agreement and yet not changing one jot. When I encounter this attitude, I feel that I have not made sufficiently clear what it is that I stand for; I feel that I want to warn the public off the dangerous ground they are treading. These people have so often no right to agree with me. They have not gone through the long and painful noviciate which would alone create a new heart within them. They ought to remain at their old stage of violent repulsion. So that when I hear what Canadian police inspectors think about my books I am reassured. There are still people engaged in maintaining an element which is essential to the complete harmony of my little universe.

THE END

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